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OUR QUEEN









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THE QUEEN IN 1846.

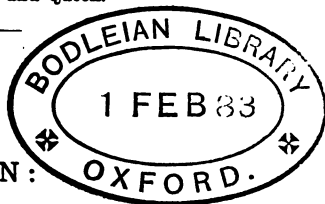
UR EEN:

A SKETCH OF

*THE LIFE AND TIMES OF VICTORIA,
Queen of Great Britain and Ireland.*

BY THE
AUTHOR OF "GRACE DARLING."

" Her court was pure ; her life serene ;
God gave her peace ; her land reposed ;
A thousand claims to reverence closed
In her as Mother, Wife, and Queen."



LONDON:
WALTER SCOTT, 14 PATERNOSTER SQUARE,
AND NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE.

226.j.419



P R E F A C E.

IN sending forth those sketches of the Life and Times of our Queen, we feel that no apology is needed. It is impossible for any nation not to feel interested in its Sovereign ; and we are so happy as to have a monarch whose character and actions have so endeared her to the hearts of her people that any information respecting her is eagerly welcomed. That her Majesty knows and realises this is abundantly proved in the little books that she has herself sent forth among her people. Her *Leaves from the Journal of our Life in the Highlands*, and the *Life of the Prince Consort*, give more details of the domestic life of the royal family than have been gleaned from any other source. The Queen, in one respect, lives her

life in public ; for the daily papers of every morning give us an account of the things in which she has been engaged, the company favoured by her reception, and the places which she has visited. In another respect her Majesty lives a comparatively private life ; for people whom she honours do not at once rush into print, and tell boastful stories of the distinguished privileges which have been accorded them. But we are very much mistaken if the additional incidents which have been culled from various quarters, and are here grouped together, will not prove interesting to many of her Majesty's loving subjects, for they show, at all events, that she is worthy of their love.

No sketch of the life of the Queen could have been written without reference to the times during which she has reigned. And these have been remarkable in every respect. The progress made in industry, art, science, and literature has been astonishing. Steam and Electricity—mighty forces to move the world—have been developed ; and by them all nations have been brought together. In Painting and in Music great advances have been made. Education, from being the possession of only a favoured

few, has become the heritage of every British child, and England has become a nation of readers ; for the periodical and newspaper literature is in every home. Nor are books absent. We have not even mentioned the names of one in a dozen of the authors who have exercised a vast influence over the minds of the age ; but such men as Brewster, Herschell, Faraday, Huxley, Mill, Dickens, Thackeray, and a host of others, have added to the renown of the Victorian era. Our Queen has done all that she could to promote the advancement of that which is good. She is herself the patron of all true work ; and the ablest minds of our age know that they will receive encouragement from her. In commerce, art, science, literature—and last, but not least, in religion—her Majesty is as deeply interested as her subjects. As we think of the great advantages that we enjoy, the old words of the Hebrew writer become altogether applicable to our modern life :—" Happy is that people that is in such a case ; yea, happy is that people whose God is the Lord."



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OUR QUEEN.

CHAPTER I.

First Years of the Queen.

“Sweet as English air could make her, she !”

“**T**HE English like Queens.” So wrote the old Duchess of Saxe-Coburg, the grandmother of our Queen, when the news reached her that Victoria was born. England had, indeed, been greatly saddened and disappointed when the beloved Princess Charlotte died, and the Royal House was childless ; and a feeling of hope and joy ran through the nation when, on the 24th May 1819, there came into the world a little stranger, who might possibly be the future Queen. It was not by any means certain that this would be the case ; for several other Royal children were born in the same year, and others nearer the throne might come to supersede her : but still there was probability enough to awaken very deep interest in the baby-girl, tended by loving hands in Kensington Palace, through the bright summer weather of 1819 ; and to cause others to think the thought which the Duchess put

into words, "Again a Charlotte, destined perhaps to play a great part one day, if a brother is not born to take it out of her hands. The English like Queens." No brother was born; for when the baby was only a few months old, her father, the Duke of Kent, died, and her mother was left a widow. But when the baby was only three months old, and her father still living, there occurred one of the many incidents which have at different times awakened intense solicitude and excitement in the hearts that hold Victoria dear. The Duke of Kent was standing at a window, nursing the infant, when an escaped lunatic, who by some means had contrived to gain access to the grounds, fired a pistol. The bullet passed over the shoulder of the Duke and lodged in the opposite wall, no harm being done to either the Duke or the baby.

When the Duchess of Kent lost her husband, it would have been little wonder if she had gone back to her own country; for she was poor, and could not at that time speak a word of the English language. But never has it happened to a little fatherless girl to have a wiser or better mother than had the child to whom the name of Alexandrina Victoria was given. The Duchess of Kent was determined that her daughter, who was English-born, should receive a thoroughly English education. She therefore remained in England, and began at once to devote herself to her child. She said once, when the Princess was old enough to understand her, "I am anxious to bring you up as a good woman, and then you will be a good Queen also."

It was in this spirit that the Duchess commenced and continued the pleasant work of training her child, for whom, it may be said, that henceforth she lived. Great sympathy was felt for her widowed and isolated state, and both Houses of Parliament sent addresses of condolence to her. She received the deputation in person, holding in her arms the infant Victoria; and she told Lords Morpeth and

Clive, who represented the Commons, that she was resolved to dedicate all her energies to the preservation and improvement of her baby. How well she kept her promise, and what a great debt of gratitude England owes to her, will perhaps never be fully known.

To help the Duchess came her brother Leopold, the widowed husband of the Princess Charlotte. He invited his sister and her little girl to Claremont, the house in which his own short married life had been spent; and the Queen tells us that "those days of Claremont were the happiest of my childhood." She had a half-sister, older than herself, Princess Feodora, afterward Princess Hohenlohe, whom she loved, and who was the companion of her play and her lessons, and at Kensington and Claremont, with an occasional visit to some watering-place, the first years of the Queen were passed.

One of the earliest notices we have of the infant Victoria is in a letter written by Wilberforce to Hannah Moore, bearing date July 21st 1820:—"In consequence of a very civil message from the Duchess of Kent, I waited on her this morning. She received me with her fine, animated child on the floor by her side, with its playthings, of which I soon became one."

We are glad to know that the little one was allowed, for some years at least, to do nothing but play. Her grandmother, writing to the Duchess of Kent in 1823, says, "Do not tease your little puss with learning; she is so young still."

But she mastered the alphabet almost before she could express her thoughts in words. She was learning the names of the letters, when she grew impatient at the difficulty.

"What good this? What good this?" she exclaimed.

"Mamma can know all that is in the great book on the table, because she knows her letters, but her little daughter cannot," was the reply.

"I learn too, I learn too, very quick," responded the child.

The same spirit possessed her when she began to learn the piano; the monotony of the first lessons made her impatient, but she was told that she must make herself "mistress of the piano."

"Oh, I am to be mistress of my piano, am I?" said she.

"Yes, indeed, Princess."

"Then what would you think of me if I became mistress at once?"

"That would be impossible. There is no royal road to music. Experience and great practice are essential."

"Oh, there is no royal road to music, eh? No royal road? And I am not mistress of my pianoforte? But I will be, I assure you; and the royal road is this"—and she closed the piano, locked it, and put the key into her pocket. "There! That is being mistress of the piano! and the royal road to learning is, never to take a lesson till you are in the humour to do it."

It should be mentioned that after the joke was over she herself volunteered to go on with her lesson.

Leigh Hunt, in his interesting book, *The Old Court Suburb*, says:—"We remember well the peculiar kind of personal pleasure which it gave us to see the future Queen, the first time we ever did see her, coming up a cross-path from the Bayswater Gate, with a girl of her own age by her side, whose hand she was holding as if she loved her. It brought to our mind the warmth of our own juvenile friendships, and made us fancy that she loved everything else that we had loved in like measure—books, trees, verses, Arabian tales, and the good mother who had helped to make her affectionate. A magnificent footman in scarlet came behind her, with the splendidest pair of calves that we had ever beheld. He looked somehow like a gigantic fairy, personating, for his little lady's sake, the grandest footman he could think of; and his calves he seemed to have made out

of a couple of the biggest chaise-lamps in the possession of the godmother of Cinderella."

Lord Albermarle in his autobiography, says :—"One of my occupations of a morning, while waiting for the duke, was to watch from the windows the movements of a bright, pretty little girl, seven years of age. She was in the habit of watering the plants immediately under the window. It was amusing to see how impartially she divided the contents of the watering-pot between the flowers and her own little feet. Her simple but becoming dress contrasted favourably with the gorgeous apparel now worn by the little damsels of the rising generation—a large straw hat and a suit of white cotton—a coloured fichu round the neck was the only ornament she wore. The young lady I am describing was Princess Victoria."

She was very carefully trained in all respects. She came, on the father's side at least, of a money-spending race; and her mother, no doubt, thought it necessary to instil within her habits of strict economy and self-control in the matter of expenditure. Miss Martineau tells a story illustrating this :—"It became known at Tunbridge Wells that the Princess had been unable to buy a box at the Bazaar because she had spent her money. At this Bazaar she had bought presents for almost all her relations, and had laid out her last shilling, when she remembered one cousin more, and saw a box, price half-a-crown, which would suit him. The shop people, of course, placed the box with the other purchases, but the little lady's governess admonished them by saying, 'No; you see the Princess has not got the money: therefore, of course, she cannot have the box.' This being perceived, the next offer was to lay by the box till it could be purchased, and the answer was, 'Oh, well, if you will be so good as to do that.' On Quarter-day, before seven in the morning, the Princess appeared on her donkey to claim her purchase."

When she was at Ramsgate an incident occurred which proved that she understood her mother's teachings, and was influenced by them. That mother, when she took her child for the first time to see the statue which had been erected in Portland Place, in memory of the Duke of Kent, said, "Dear Papa's likeness was placed there, not merely because he was a prince, but because he was a good man, was kind to the poor, caused little boys and girls to read and write, helped to get money from good people to cure the sick, the lame, the blind, the deaf, and did all he could to make bad people good." Victoria evidently wished to follow in her father's steps. She had come up from the sands one morning, when she saw a poor old Irishwoman, looking very dejected and miserable, sitting on a door-step. She was not begging, nor taking any notice of the passers-by. The Princess glanced under the poor woman's bonnet, and understood her case with that quick sympathy with sorrow which has ever characterised our Queen. She spoke a few hurried words to her mother, and then, with a smile of gladness, went to the poor woman, and placed some silver in her hands. The old Irishwoman arose, trembling, astonished, overjoyed; and as she turned over the sixpence that had been given her, she thanked the Virgin, as well as the "young English lady," and called upon Heaven to bless her young benefactress.

The little Victoria had some wilfulness in her. She was like

"A rosebud, set with little wilful thorns,"

and it had to be taken out of her, as of other children, by experience.

Once she was playing with a dog of uncertain temper; and she was warned to desist. She was not afraid, however, and continued her frolic. Presently the dog made a snap at her hand.

"Oh, Princess, I am afraid you are bitten," said the person who had cautioned her, running to her assistance.

"Oh, thank you! thank you!" said Victoria. "You are right, and I am wrong: but he didn't bite me, he only warned me. I shall be careful in future."

On another occasion, when she was walking in the grounds of Earl Fitzwilliam, an under-gardener advised her not to go down a certain walk because it was "slape." "Slape! slape!" said Victoria, "and pray, what is *slape*?"

"Very slippery, miss—ma'am, your Royal Highness," said the man.

"Oh! that's all," said the Princess. "Thank you;" and she immediately turned into the slippery walk.

But she had not gone far when her feet slipped, and she fell heavily on the ground.

The Earl cried out, "There! now your Royal Highness has an explanation of the term 'slape,' both theoretically and practically."

"Yes, my lord," was the meek reply, "I shall never forget the word *slape*."

It had been decided by the Duchess of Kent and Prince Leopold that for some years no intimation of the possible honour in store for Victoria should be made to her. Sir Walter Scott in his diary wrote:—"This little lady is educated with much care, and watched so closely that no busy maid has a moment to whisper, 'You are the heir of England.'" He adds, however, "I suspect if we could dissect the little heart, we should find that some pigeon or other bird of the air had carried the matter."

Sir Walter, however, was mistaken. Victoria was twelve years old before she knew what honours were probably in store for her; and she was as much surprised as moved by the knowledge. The story is told in a letter from Baroness Lehzen, one of the governesses of the Queen:—

"I ask your Majesty's leave to cite some remarkable words of your Majesty when only twelve years old, while

the Regency Bill was in progress. I then said to the Duchess of Kent that now, for the first time, your Majesty ought to know your place in the succession. Her Royal Highness agreed with me, and I put the genealogical table into the historical book. When Mr. Davys (the Queen's instructor, afterwards Bishop of Peterborough) was gone, the Princess Victoria opened the book again as usual, and seeing the additional paper, said, 'I never saw that before.'

"It was not thought necessary that you should, Princess," I answered.

"I see I am nearer the throne than I thought.

"So it is, madam," I said.

"After some moments the Princess resumed, 'Now, many a child would boast, but they don't know the difficulty. There is much splendour, but there is much responsibility!'

"The Princess, having lifted up the forefinger of her right hand while she spoke, gave me that little hand, saying, 'I will be good. I understand now why you urged me much to learn even Latin. My cousins Augusta and Mary never did; but you told me Latin is the foundation of English grammar, and of all the elegant expressions, and I learnt it as you wished it; but I understand it all better now.' And the little Princess gave me her hand, repeating, 'I will be good.'"

The words uttered so seriously then may be said to have formed the life motto of our Queen. She has taken no trouble to declare, "I will be great," "I will be illustrious," "I will be clever," but her whole life has said, "*I will be good—I will be good.*"

God be thanked for a good woman on the British throne.





CHAPTER II.

The Girlhood of our Queen.

"In the light of her youth and her grace."

THE Regency Bill, referred to in the letter of the Baroness Lehzen, was passed, when, by the death of George IV., William, Duke of Clarence, third son of George III., became King. The Duke of York had died in 1827, and Princess Victoria was now the direct heir to the throne. King George IV. had not taken much notice of his niece until after her sixth birthday, when he requested that some additional provision should be made for her ; and a grant of £6000 per annum, to continue throughout the minority of the Princess, was voted to the Duchess of Kent. After this the Princess paid a visit to the King at Windsor, and he appeared much pleased with her. He made her dine in state with him, and he asked, "What tune would you like the band to play during dinner?"

"God save the King," replied sensible little Victoria.

She was at this time brought more into notice than she had been previously ; and lest popularity should make her

vain, her mother cautioned her with a few motherly-wise words :—

“It is not you, but your future office and rank, which are regarded by the country. You must so act as never to bring that office and that rank into disgrace or disrespect.”

The Regency Bill provided that in case Queen Adelaide, the wife of King William, should have no children, the Duchess of Kent should, during the minority of her daughter, who was now the heiress-presumptive, be guardian and Regent. The Princess was not to marry while she was a minor, except with the consent of the King, or, in case of his death, the consent of both Houses of Parliament. A clause was added by Lord Lyndhurst, to the effect, that if the Duchess of Kent married a foreigner during the King's lifetime, without his permission, she should forfeit all pretensions to the Regency.

The Queen's grandmother, the affectionate old lady in Germany, wrote her congratulations to her daughter :—

“I should have been sorry if the Regency had been given into other hands than yours. It would not have been a just return for your constant devotion and care to your child if this had not been done. May God give you wisdom and strength to do your duty, if called upon to undertake it. May God bless and protect my little darling. If I could but once see her again ! The print you have sent to me is not like the dear picture I have. The quantity of curls hide the well-shaped head, and make it look too large for the lovely little figure.”

But the good Duchess of Coburg never saw her little grand-daughter again. She had written when George IV. died : “God bless old England, where my beloved children live, and where the sweet Blossom of May may one day reign ! May God yet, for many years, keep the weight of a crown from her young head, and let the intelligent, clever

child grow up to girlhood before this dangerous grandeur devolves upon her."

We must give one more, the last, extract from the letters of the Duchess of Coburg. It was written on the occasion of Victoria's birthday, in the year 1830. "My blessings and good wishes for the day which gave you the sweet Blossom of May. May God preserve and protect the valuable life of that lovely flower from all the dangers that will beset her mind and heart."

It was in the year 1830 that Prince Leopold was made King of the Belgians. This did not prevent his being often in England, and superintending the education and training of the future Queen.

In the following year a great deal of curiosity was evinced in regard to the kind of teaching which the Princess was receiving. Indeed it was no easy task that was set before the Duchess of Kent. The Duchess of Northumberland, at the suggestion of the King, had been made governess, and her teachers were most of them English. Mr. Amos gave her important instructions in the principles of the English Constitution. She received drawing-lessons from Mr. Westall; and Fozard, the best riding-master of the day, taught her horsemanship.

At this time in the history of the Princess certain very absurd rumours respecting her got afloat. For some reason or other—most likely because her mother did not wish her to be so early brought to the front—she was not present at the coronation of William IV., and gossip-mongers declared that it was because her proper place in the ceremony was refused her. The King was certainly not always pleased at the restraint under which the young Princess was kept, but English people have reason to be thankful to the Duchess for keeping her secluded from the court of the last two sovereigns. But the Princess was presented at Queen Adelaide's first Drawing-Room, when she wore a dress

simple and modest, and made entirely of articles manufactured in her native land. On her twelfth birthday, the Queen gave a juvenile ball in her honour; of which ball Victoria has often talked. It was her first, and it made a great impression on her childish imagination.

Mrs. Oliphant, in her *Life of the Queen*, written for the *Graphic*, tells how the Duchess was equally blamed for keeping the young Princess out of the buzz of the Court, and for taking her on little expeditions, so that she should become acquainted with her country. "Her mother kept her child from all vulgar contact with the crowd—it was 'a rigorous seclusion.' She took her to see a beautiful Cathedral, or an historical house—it was 'an attempt at a royal progress.'" But the Duchess of Kent wisely acted as she thought best, conscientiously training her daughter, but endeavouring to shield her from all influences that might have been harmful. Great care was taken that there should be no political bias given to the education of the Princess, although some people professed to believe otherwise; and few had, in their judgment of the matter, that charity which hopes and believes the greatest good. It has required the further information of these later years to estimate the Duchess at her right worth. At one time, false reports were set afloat respecting the health of the Princess, which was said to be very poor. The truth is, that there can be no doubt that Her Majesty is greatly indebted to the sensible training of the Duchess for the really splendid health which she has for so many years enjoyed. The mother knew that a Queen's life would entail much hard work, and require great powers of endurance; and the Princess used—although for certain hours of the day she was kept closely at study—to spend a great many hours in the open air. Thick shoes and a warm cloak protected her from the weather, and she would walk and ride both in sunshine and in rain.

During the years from 1831 to 1835 the Duchess of Kent and her daughter paid several visits to various parts of England, and in this way the Princess was made acquainted with objects of beauty and interest in her native land, and with the habits and customs of the people over whom she was to reign. This was a more effectual mode of instructing her than any other ; and not only did she gain much knowledge, but as she had, even then, often to receive deputations and addresses, there was forced upon her at an early age the necessity of acting with the grace and self-possession which have ever since stood Her Majesty in good stead.

She was staying with her mother in the Isle of Wight at the time of King William's coronation. The same year they went to Worthing, and also paid a visit to Lord Liverpool and his daughters at Buxted Park. From this place they went to Malvern, when Victoria had the opportunity of visiting Worcester Cathedral, a privilege which she greatly valued, as she has always loved the stately architecture and the solemn church music of these grand old places. Gilchrist, in his *Life and Anecdotes of Queen Victoria*, says, "To the public institutions of the Cathedral cities which she visited she was an invariable benefactress, and willingly beggared herself of all her pocket money, that she might be the better able to meet the demands of art, science, literature, and poverty upon her benevolence."

Hereford and Bath were next visited ; and the Duchess and Princess were also entertained at Eastnor Castle and Maddresfield Court by Earls Somers and Beauchamp. They also stayed at Weymouth during the same year.

In the autumn of the following year they took a more extensive journey into Wales, where they enjoyed the beauties of mountains and waterfalls, quiet glens, and rushing seas. On October 17th, they went to the old City of Chester, in the Cathedral of which the Bishop received them, and presented an address. The Duchess of Kent replied to it—"I cannot

better allude to your good feelings towards the Princess than by joining fervently in the wish that she may set an example in her conduct of that piety towards God, and charity towards men, which is the only sure foundation either of individual happiness or national prosperity." When the visit to Chester was over they went to Eaton Hall, the residence of the Grosvenors, and then to Chatsworth, the house of the Cavendish family. On leaving Chatsworth they went to Belper; and here a new experience awaited the Princess, for she was taken to the cotton mill of the Messrs. Strutt—Mr. James Strutt explaining to her the different processes of the cotton manufacture. She was greatly interested in what she saw, and pleased with the reception given to her by the work-people, who were themselves delighted and honoured by her visit. It was indeed the first royal visit ever paid to a cotton mill. The first Lord Belper owes his title probably to this incident; for the Queen, a year after her accession, created the son of Mr. James Strutt a peer.

From Belper they went to Hardwick Hall, and then to Chesterfield and Matlock, passing to Shugborough, the seat of the Earl of Lichfield. The Earl of Shrewsbury afterwards entertained them at Alton Towers; and during this visit the Princess saw Lichfield Cathedral, and received addresses from the clergy and corporation. Thence they went to the residence of Lord Liverpool, who was a great friend of the Duchess of Kent; and on their homeward journey honoured with visits Earl Powis, the Hon. R. H. Clive, M.P., the Earl of Plymouth, and Earl Abingdon. Next they paid a visit to Oxford, and here their entrance to the city was attended with an escort of yeomanry. The celebrities of the university assembled in the theatre to hear an address read to the Princess by the Vice-Chancellor, to which the Duchess made a suitable reply. And on the 9th November they went home to Kensington.

The next year they confined their visits to the South

coast, staying at Weymouth, Portsmouth, and the Isle of Wight. To the great joy of the inhabitants of Southampton, they attended the opening of the new pier, which the Duchess, at their request, named the Royal Pier.

In the year 1834 they went northward, and attended the Grand Musical Festival in York Cathedral, staying during their visit at Bishopsthorpe, the residence of the Archbishop. From York they went to the seats of the Earls of Harewood and Fitzwilliam, and the Duke of Rutland. Then they visited the King and Queen of the Belgians, who were staying at Ramsgate, and concluded their summer tour at Walmer Castle, the home of the Duke of Wellington.

It was in the year 1834 that the Princess was confirmed by the Archbishop of Canterbury, in the Chapel Royal, St. James'; and at this time, and afterwards, the religious and benevolent character of our future Queen seems to have been rapidly developed. There is a story told of her kindness to a poor actress in the small theatre of Tunbridge. Her husband died, leaving her in the greatest poverty and in distress, that was increased by the fact that she was about to become a mother. The Princess heard of the poor woman's trouble, and at once decided to give her ten pounds from her own purse. She persuaded the Duchess of Kent to give her the same sum, and, with twenty pounds at her disposal, she hastened to the widow, entered into conversation with her, and gave her the money. Nor did she forget her afterwards; for when she came to the throne, she undertook to send the poor woman forty pounds a year for life.

Thomas Moore, in his *Diary*, tells how he was invited to meet the Duchess and Princess at Watson Taylor's, and how fond of music the latter appeared to be. The Princess sang several duets with her mother, and Moore says she "would have gone on singing much longer if there had not been rather premature preparations for bed."

In the *Life of Leslie* the painter, there is an account of

a visit which the Princess paid to the Royal Academy. He says: "The little Princess has all the charms of youth, health, and high spirits. She could have seen little of the exhibition, as she was herself, from the moment of entering the room, the sole object of attraction; and there were so many people among the nobility present whom she knew, and every one of whom had something to say to her. She heard that Charles Kemble was in the room, and she desired he might be presented to her, which gave him an opportunity of making one of his best genteel comedy bows. She shook hands and chatted with Mr. Rogers."





CHAPTER III.

First Years of Albert the Good.

"Dear, near, and true—no truer Time himself can make you."

WHILE the Princess Victoria was thus forming the character which should make her future reign illustrious, another life was progressing, which was destined to exert a mighty and benignant influence upon not only the Queen of England, but England itself.

Three months after the birth of Victoria, there occurred at The Rosenau, the summer residence of the Duke of Saxe-Coburg Saalfeld, another birth—that of Francis Charles Augustus Albert Emmanuel, the future Prince Consort of England. The grandmother of the two babies, the mother of the Duchess of Kent already referred to, says, in the letter which took the news of the birth to Kensington a day afterward, he "looks about like a little squirrel, with a pair of large blue eyes." The nurse, Madam Siebold, had gone from Kensington to The Rosenau, and there was plenty of talk about the two royal cousins, in regard to whose future the fond grandmother at once began to dream

romantic things. She wrote to the Duchess of Kent—"Little Alberinchen, with his large blue eyes and dimpled cheeks, is bewitching, forward, and quick as a weasel. He can already say everything." This was when he was two years old ; and in another letter she says, "The little fellow is the pendant to the pretty cousin (Princess Victoria), very handsome, but too slight for a boy ; lively, very funny ; all good-nature, and full of mischief."

As Albert's mother was divorced while he was little more than a baby, the care of him and his elder brother Ernest devolved greatly upon his grandmother, who gladly and conscientiously fulfilled the trust. She was, as was the Duchess of Kent, greatly assisted by the advice and supervision of the uncle Leopold, of whose care of Victoria we have already written. The young Prince very early developed traits of character that were full of promise. Gentleness and firmness, warmth of feeling and benevolence, were soon manifest in him. Count Arthur Mensdorff, the cousin of the Prince, says, "It was only what he thought unjust or dishonest that could make him angry. Thus I recollect one day when we were children, Albert, Ernest, Ferdinand, Augustus, Alexander, myself, and a few other boys, were playing at The Rosenau, and some of us were to storm the old ruined tower on the side of the castle, which the others were to defend. One of us suggested that there was a place at the back by which we could get in without being seen, and thus capture it without difficulty. Albert declared that this would be most unbecoming in a Saxon knight, who should always attack the enemy in front ; and so we fought for the tower so honestly and vigorously, that Albert, by mistake, for I was on his side, gave me a blow upon the nose, of which I still bear the mark. I need not say how sorry he was for the wound he had given me."

We learn from Sir Theodore Martin's interesting *Life of the Prince* that "the education of the Princes was of the

broad, general character best suited to their position. It included history, geography, mathematics, philosophy, religion, Latin, and the modern European languages, relieved by the study of music and drawing, for both of which the Prince early showed a marked inclination. He was also, from childhood, fond of natural history. In the researches to which this led he developed the habit of exact observation, for which, in later life, he was pre-eminently distinguished. His tastes in this respect were fully shared by his brother; and their boyish collections formed the nucleus of the excellent Ernest Albert Museum of natural objects now deposited in the Festung of Coburg."

The Prince took great delight in exercise in the open air; his father and brother were enthusiastic sportsmen, and he was himself a good shot. The recreation which he pursued with most pleasure was deer-stalking, which took him into the midst of wild, grand scenery, and afforded him the kind of occupation which served to develop his physical strength.

On Palm Sunday, in the year 1835, the two princes, Ernest and Albert, were confirmed in the chapel of the Palace at Coburg; and the next year was a very important and eventful one in his life.

There was a strong desire in the hearts of many members of the two royal families that the Prince Albert should marry the Princess Victoria. The Dowager Duchess of Coburg had especially wished it. They were wise enough, however, to try to keep their wish a secret from the young people themselves, though the Prince must have known of it; for when he was only three years old, his nurse used to talk to him about "his little bride in England, the sweet May-flower." When the year 1836 had arrived, King Leopold thought very anxiously of the matter. It was time, indeed, to take some steps, for already there were aspirants for the hand of Victoria. Martin says King

Leopold's "own opinion was that no Prince was so truly qualified to make his niece happy as her cousin Albert, or to fulfil so worthily the difficult duties of the Consort of an English Queen. But he loved the Princess too well, and was too deeply conscious of the immense responsibility of such a choice, to act with precipitation, or upon his own judgment merely, which the bias of natural affection, no less than of family feeling, might insensibly have warped. He took counsel with one who was not liable to be misled from any such cause, and on whose penetrating judgment of men and things, no less than his fearless independence, the King had learned by long experience to place implicit reliance. This was his friend and private adviser, Baron Christian Friedrich Von Stockmar."

Lord Palmerston once said, "I have come in my life across only one absolutely disinterested man—Stockmar."

The position of Stockmar in King Leopold's house in England gave him an opportunity of knowing the Princess Victoria, and also what the English people would require in her Consort; and when Leopold requested him to become better acquainted with Albert, and give his opinion respecting him, he gladly consented. All readers of the *Life of the Prince Consort* know how strong was the attachment which in early life he formed for Stockmar, and how Stockmar's counsel and letters were of the greatest use and comfort to him in the difficult years of his after life. The Baron's opinion of the Prince was shown in a letter, which furnishes evidence also of the principles which guided Stockmar in his intercourse with the Prince. "Albert is a fine young fellow, well-grown for his age, with agreeable and valuable qualities; and who, if things go well, may, in a few years, turn out a strong, handsome man, of a kindly, simple, yet dignified demeanour. Externally, therefore, he possesses all that pleases the sex, and at all times, and in all countries, must please. It may prove, too, a lucky circum-

stance that even now he has something of an English look. But now the question is, How as to his mind? On this point, too, one hears much to his credit. But these judgments are all more or less partial; and, until I have observed him longer, I can form no judgment as to his capacity, and the probable development of his character. He is said to be circumspect, discreet, and, even now, cautious. But all this is not enough. He ought to have not merely great ability, but a *right* ambition, and great force of will as well; to pursue for a lifetime a political career so arduous, demands more than energy and inclination,—it demands also that earnest frame of mind which is ready, of its own accord, to sacrifice mere pleasure to real usefulness. If he is not satisfied hereafter with the consciousness of having achieved one of the most influential positions in Europe, how often will he feel tempted to repent what he has undertaken? If he does not, from the very outset, accept it as a vocation of grave responsibility, on the efficient fulfilment of which his honour and happiness depend, there is small likelihood of his succeeding."

The after life of the Prince Consort was a fine sequel to these wise words.

In May 1836, the two young persons in whom so many people were interested, met for the first time. The Duke of Saxe-Coburg came, with his two sons, on a visit to the Duchess of Kent; and although Stockmar had stipulated that the object of the visit should be kept strictly secret from the Princess as well as from the Prince, so as to leave them completely at their ease, their friends and relatives were intensely anxious as to the result.

The Prince seems to have enjoyed his visit to London, though very little has ever been said about it. He only says in his letters that his aunt and cousin were "very kind" and "most amiable." The royal visitors were *fêted* and honoured in various ways, and we are told that Albert had

some "hard battles to fight against sleepiness," for he was not used to the late hours of London life. There was a brilliant ball at Kensington Palace, and the Princes stayed until four o'clock in the morning ; and there is a story of a bunch of flowers which the Princess gave to the Prince on this occasion.

The German visitors only stayed in London about four weeks ; but the Prince always afterwards contrived to keep up an occasional correspondence with his cousin, and used to send her little accounts of his travels, and little reminders of himself, such as a book of views of the places which he visited, or "an Alpine rose gathered from the Righi."

The Queen herself tells us that at this time nothing was settled ; but King Leopold could not rest without knowing what kind of an impression had been made upon her ; and he therefore made known his wishes to the Princess in a letter. Her reply assured him that her wishes were in accordance with his own, and concludes with the words, "I have only now to beg you, my dearest uncle, to take care of the health of one now so dear to me, and to take him under your special protection. I hope and trust that all will go on prosperously and well on this subject, now of so much importance to me."

But the Princess Victoria had soon to fill her mind with thoughts far other than those of her cousin.





CHAPTER IV.

The Young Queen.

"O loyal to the royal in thyself,
And loyal to thy land."

THERE were great rejoicings on the 24th of May 1837, for the Princess Victoria was declared to be legally of age, having attained her eighteenth birthday. It was kept as a general holiday, and at Kensington especially there were demonstrations of enthusiastic delight. The Union Jack was hoisted, and flags and banners waved from many of the houses. At six o'clock in the evening the gates of the Palace were thrown open to the public; and at seven, the hour at which, eighteen years before, the Princess drew her first breath, a serenade was performed. There were brilliant fireworks and illuminations; many addresses, and still more presents; and at night a grand ball at St. James's Palace.

Among the presents was a splendid piano from the King. It was known that His Majesty was in enfeebled health; but no one guessed then that a month after her eighteenth

birthday Victoria would become Queen. Yet so it was. At half-past two o'clock of June 20th, 1837, King William died, and the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Lord Chamberlain went to Kensington to carry the tidings. They arrived about five o'clock in the morning, and Miss Wynn has given an amusing account of what took place :— "They knocked, they rang, they thumped for a considerable time before they could rouse the porter at the gate ; they were again kept waiting at the court-yard ; then turned into one of the lower rooms, where they seemed forgotten by everybody. They rang the bell, and desired that the attendant of the Princess Victoria might be sent to inform her Royal Highness that they requested an audience on business of importance. After another delay, and another ringing to inquire the cause, the attendant was summoned, who stated that the Princess was in such a sweet sleep that she could not venture to disturb her. Then they said, ' We are come on business of state to the Queen, and even her sleep must give way to that.' It did ; and to prove that she did not keep them waiting, in a few minutes she came into the room in a loose white night-gown and shawl, her nightcap thrown off, and her hair falling upon her shoulders, her feet in slippers, tears in her eyes, but perfectly collected and dignified."

The Archbishop told her that the King was dead, and formally announced to her that she was in law and right his successor. She was deeply agitated, and the first words she was able to utter were, "I ask your prayers in my behalf." So they knelt down together, and the Archbishop prayed that to the girl of eighteen, to whom had been given the sovereignty of the most powerful nation of the earth, might also be given "an understanding heart, to judge so great a people."

The widowed Queen also sent a messenger to Victoria, to apprise her of the death of the King. Victoria at once



HER MAJESTY AT THE AGE OF TEN.

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called for paper, and wrote a letter of condolence to the widow, now become Queen-Dowager. She addressed it, "To the Queen of England."—"Your Majesty, you are Queen of England," said her maid of honour, who had noticed the inscription. "Yes," was the reply, "but the widowed Queen is not to be reminded of the fact first by me."

The Prime Minister, Lord Melbourne, was sent for, and a Privy Council was summoned for eleven o'clock. The first thing to be done was for the Lord Chancellor to administer the usual oaths to the Queen, who, in her turn, received the oaths of the Ministers and other members of the Council.

Harriet Martineau thus describes this event :—"On the meeting of the Princes, Peers, and other Councillors, they signed the oath of allegiance, and the first name on the list was that of Ernest, King of Hanover. The Queen caused them all to be sworn-in Members of the Council, and then addressed them ; after which they issued orders for the proclamation of Her Majesty. If the millions who longed to know how the young Sovereign looked and felt, could have heard her first address, it would have gone far to satisfy them. The address was, of course, prepared for her ; but the manner and voice were her own, and they told much. Her manner was composed, modest, and dignified ; her voice firm and sweet ; her reading, as usual, beautiful. She took the necessary oaths, and received the eager homage of the thronging nobility without agitation or any awkwardness. The declaration contained an affectionate reference to the deceased King ; an assertion of her attachment to the constitution of the country, and of her intention to rule in accordance with it ; a grateful allusion to her mother's educational care of her ; an avowal that, under circumstances of such eminent responsibility as hers, she relied for support and guidance on Divine Providence, and a pledge

that her life should be devoted to the happiness of her people. The Ministers returned into her hands, and received again, the seals of their respective offices; the stamps in official use were ordered to be altered, as also the prayers of the Church which related to the royal family; the Proclamation was prepared and signed by the Privy Counsellors, and the Queen appointed the next day, Wednesday, for the ceremony. The first use of the Great Seal under the new reign was to authenticate the official Proclamation, which was gazetted the same evening. During the whole morning carriages were driving up rapidly, bringing visitors eager to offer their homage. What a day of whirl and fatigue for one in a position so lonely at such tender years. How welcome must have been the night, and the quiet of her pillow, whatever might be the thoughts that rested upon it. The next morning she appeared 'extremely pale and fatigued;' and no wonder, for she had passed through a day which could never be paralleled."

Mr. Greville, who was certainly no flatterer of royalty, gives his account of the behaviour of the young Queen at her first Council:—"Never was anything like the impression she produced, or the chorus of praise and admiration which is raised about her manner and behaviour, and certainly not without justice. It was very extraordinary, and something far beyond what was looked for. Her extreme youth and inexperience, and the ignorance of the world concerning her, naturally excited intense curiosity to see how she would act on this trying occasion; and there was a considerable assemblage at the palace, notwithstanding the short notice which was given. The first thing to be done was to teach her her lesson, which, for this purpose, Melbourne had himself to learn. . . . She bowed to the lords, took her seat, and then read her speech in a clear, distinct, and audible voice, without any appearance of fear or embarrassment. She was quite plainly dressed, and in mourn-

ing. After she had read her speech, and taken and signed the oath for the security of the Church of Scotland, the Privy Councillors were sworn, the two royal Dukes first by themselves; and as these two old men, her uncles, knelt before her, swearing allegiance and kissing her hand, I saw her blush up to the eyes, as if she felt the contrast between their civil and their natural relations, and this was the only sign of emotion which she evinced. Her manner to them was very graceful and engaging; she kissed them both, and rose from her chair and moved toward the Duke of Sussex, who was farthest from her, and too infirm to reach her."

Gilchrist says that she would not let the old man kiss her hand, but she kissed his cheek instead, and said, "Do not kneel, my uncle, for I am still Victoria, your niece."

"She seemed," Greville continues, "rather bewildered at the multitude of men who were sworn; and who came, one after another, to kiss her hand; but she did not speak to anybody, nor did she make the slightest difference in her manner, or show any in her countenance, to any individual of any rank, station or party. I particularly watched her when Melbourne and the Ministers, and the Duke of Wellington and Peel, approached her. She went through the whole ceremony, occasionally looking to Melbourne for instruction when she had any doubt what to do, which hardly ever occurred, with perfect calmness and self-possession, but at the same time with a graceful modesty and propriety, particularly interesting and ingratiating."

On the next day, June the 21st, Alexandrina Victoria was publicly proclaimed Queen. She reached St. James' Palace at ten o'clock in the morning, and was there received by the members of the royal family, the officers of the household, and Ministers of State. The guns in the park fired a salute, and the Queen appeared at an open window which looked on the quadrangle nearest Marlborough House. The space was crowded with ladies and

gentlemen, and the parapets above were filled with people. At sight of the Queen the multitude broke forth into shouts of greeting and joy, at which all the colour faded from the Queen's cheeks, and her eyes filled with tears. She was dressed in deep mourning, with a white tippet, white cuffs, and a border of white lace under a small black bonnet, which was worn back on the head, and showed her light brown hair, which was simply parted in front. She is described as small in stature, and without much pretension to beauty, but with a graceful manner, and good expression of countenance, so that her appearance was pleasing and agreeable. She was gifted with a clear and beautiful voice, which from the first excited the admiration of the people.

The Proclamation, which was read by the Garter King-at-Arms, was as follows :—"Whereas it hath pleased Almighty God to call to His mercy our late Sovereign Lord, King William IV., of blessed memory, by whose decease the Imperial Crown of the United Kingdom of Great Britian and Ireland is solely come to the High and Mighty Princess Alexandrina Victoria, we, therefore, the Lords Spiritual and Temporal of this Realm, being here assisted with those of his late Majesty's Privy Council, with numbers of other principal gentlemen of quality, the Lord Mayor, Aldermen, and citizens of London, do now hereby, with one voice and consent of tongue, proclaim that the High and Mighty Princess Alexandrina Victoria is now, by the death of our late Sovereign William IV., of happy memory, become our only lawful and rightful Liege Lady, Alexandrina Victoria I., Queen of Great Britain and Ireland, Defender of the Faith, to whom we acknowledge all faith and constant obedience, with all humble and hearty affection, beseeching God, by whom Kings and Queens do reign, to bless the Royal Princess Alexandrina Victoria with long and happy years to reign. God save the Queen."

As the voice of the Garter King-at-Arms died away, the

band struck up the National Anthem, and the guns in the park and at the Tower were fired, and at the same moment the air was rent with the cheers of tens of thousands of voices. It was a little too much even for the calmness of the self-controlled young Queen, who turned to her mother, and throwing her arms about her, wept without restraint.

The sight of the Queen's tears moved all hearts, and awoke within them that tenderness of regard with which Her Majesty is most honoured. It was indeed a touching sight, and we do not wonder that the greatest poetess England has ever known, Elizabeth Barrett Browning, should have written some noble lines upon the incident :—

“ God save thee, weeping Queen !
Thou shall be well beloved ;
The tyrant's sceptre cannot move
As those pure tears have moved !
The nature in thy eyes we see
Which tyrant's cannot own,
The love that guardeth liberties.
Strange blessing on the nation lies,
Whose Sovereign wept,
Yea, wept to wear a crown.

“ God bless thee, weeping Queen,
With blessing more divine ;
And fill with better love than earth's
That tender heart of thine ;
That when the throne of earth shall be
As low as graves brought down,
A pierced hand may give to thee
The crown which angels shout to see ;
Thou wilt not weep
To wear that heavenly crown.”

On the 13th of July, the Queen and her mother left Kensington, and took up their residence at Buckingham Palace. Victoria felt some natural grief at leaving the home where her happy childhood had been passed ; but duties of various kinds awaited her, and she addressed

herself to them with both tact and earnestness. Her first court levée was held immediately after her removal, and it was a very splendid affair. The Queen was richly dressed; her head glittering with diamonds, and the insignia of the Garter and other orders blazing on her breast. She seemed already to have increased in grace and brilliancy, and every one was delighted with her.

Two days later the Queen went in state to dissolve Parliament. She thanked both Houses for the sympathy and zeal which had been shown to her, and said:—"I ascend the throne with a deep sense of the responsibility which is imposed upon me; but I am supported by the consciousness of my own right intentions, and by my dependence upon the protection of Almighty God. It will be my care to strengthen our institutions, civil and ecclesiastical, by discreet improvement, wherever improvement is required, and to do all in my power to compose and allay animosity and discord. Acting upon these principles I shall, upon all occasions, look with confidence to the wisdom of Parliament and the affections of my people, which form the true support of the dignity of the crown, and ensure the stability of the constitution."

Every one was surprised, even the Duchess of Kent herself, at the composure of the Queen as she read the speech, and at the musical tones of her voice, which was heard in the farthest corner of the House of Lords.

On Lord Mayor's Day, the Queen, "magnificently attired in pink satin, shot with silver," made a royal entry into the city of London. Her reception was most enthusiastic, and at the Guildhall a loyal address was read by the Recorder, which the Queen herself acknowledged. This was the occasion of Her Majesty's first state banquet; and on this day she knighted Sir Moses Montefiore, who had been chosen Sheriff of London, the first Jew to receive such honour at the hands of royalty.

At this banquet the gold plates and dishes used by George I. were produced, and the wine reserved for the royal table was more than a hundred years old. Every luxury had been provided, but the young Queen had too much good sense to drink the old wine or eat the rich food. The newspapers next day announced the fact that the Queen had eaten nothing but white soup, roast mutton, and cherry tart, and that she had drunk only iced water.

Indeed, in those early days of her reign, the Queen adhered as much as possible to her former habits. She rose at eight, spent very little time in dressing, and occupied the time before breakfast in signing despatches. She breakfasted at a quarter before ten, and at twelve held consultations with her Ministers. She carefully and conscientiously read every document she was required to sign. When the business was concluded, and she was free to leave the council chamber, she rode or walked until dinner. Her Majesty's chair at the dining table was half-way down on the right; next to her on the right hand was seated the nobleman of the highest rank; next to him the Duchess of Kent. At the head of the table was the first Lord-in-waiting, and at the foot the chief Equerry-in-waiting. The Queen always left the table early for the drawing-room, where she enjoyed some music. The Duchess of Kent was always *invited* by the Queen to breakfast or dinner, one of her Majesty's attendants being specially sent with the invitation. So careful were mother and daughter to prevent any suspicions as to undue influence being exerted, that the Duchess never approached the Queen except when specially summoned; and they were ever most careful to abstain from talking about state business, and in all things to preserve the strictest etiquette.

There is a story told of the Queen's reverence for the Sabbath which is interesting. Late one Saturday night one of the Ministers arrived at Windsor.

"I have brought down for your Majesty's inspection," said he, "some documents of great importance. But as I shall be obliged to trouble you to examine them in detail, I will not encroach on the time of your Majesty to-night, but will request your attention to-morrow morning."

"To-morrow morning!" repeated the Queen. "To-morrow is Sunday, my lord."

"True, your Majesty, but business of the state will not admit of delay."

"I am aware of that," replied the Queen, "and as your lordship could not have arrived earlier at the Palace to-night, I will, if those papers are of such pressing importance, attend to their contents to-morrow morning."

Next morning the Queen and the court went to church, and so did the noble lord; and the subject of the sermon was "The Christian Sabbath: its duties and obligations."

After the service the Queen inquired, "How did your lordship like the sermon?"

"Very much indeed, your Majesty," was the answer of the nobleman.

"Well, then," said the Queen, "I will not conceal from you that last night I sent the clergyman the text from which he preached. I hope we shall be all improved by the sermon."

Not a word was said during the whole of the day about the state papers, but when the Queen wished her minister good-night, she said, "To-morrow morning, my lord, at any hour you please; as early as seven, my lord, if you like, we will look into those papers."

"I could not think of intruding upon your Majesty at so early an hour," was the reply; "nine o'clock will be quite soon enough."

And at nine o'clock the next morning he found the Queen ready to receive him.

The first message which the Queen sent to Parliament on

its reassembling was a request that proper provision might be made for her mother, a request which was at once complied with. At the same time the question of the Queen's own income was settled. Her civil list was fixed at £385,000; that of George III. and IV. had been £1,030,000, and that of William IV., £510,300. The Queen had only complete control over the privy purse, which was fixed at £60,000, and out of this sum all her charities had to be paid. It was reckoned that £131,260 would go for the salaries of the household, "from the Master of the Horse, and the Mistress of the Robes, down to the humblest scullion and stable-helper;" and the tradesmen's bills required £172,500.

Out of the money at her command, the Queen not only provided munificently for the family of the late king, but also paid her father's debts, and those which the Duchess of Kent had unavoidedly contracted on her daughter's account. Victoria had been trained in habits of economy; and she was the better able to sustain the responsibility of the large sums of money now entrusted to her.





CHAPTER V.

The Coronation.

"A very godlike vow—to rule in right and righteousness,
And with the law and for the land—so God the vower bless."



YEAR after the Proclamation of the Queen, the ceremony of the Coronation took place in Westminster Abbey, and the grand old place has never presented a more gorgeous scene than on that auspicious occasion. London itself, indeed, was turned into a vast holiday city; into which came to assist the inhabitants in their demonstrations of loyalty and gladness four hundred thousand visitors. The joy of the nation was very real, for Victoria was the Queen of the People's choice. There was no longer any fear that the Duke of Cumberland, who was neither popular nor good, would come to the throne, which was to be graced instead by the royal lady, whose life had been all purity, and whose goodness and dignity had won all hearts. The day, June 28th, 1838, was full of brightness and promise; and the people awoke with the dawn, roused by the roar of artillery, to make it as long as possible. The usual coronation banquet in Westminster Hall was to be omitted on account of

the cost, and there were other abridgments, so that the coronation of the Queen cost £173,000 less than that of William IV. had done. But there was to be a royal procession through the streets, so that all classes of people might see their Sovereign. Very high prices were paid for good seats, and the pageant was a most splendid one. Foreign Ambassadors and persons of distinction had spent much money and thought in their desire to appear worthy of the procession. Marshal Soult, the old opponent of Wellington, was received with enthusiasm. He rode in the state carriage of the Princes of Condé, which had been beautifully decorated for the occasion. The Russian Ambassador bought the State carriage of the Duke of Devonshire, paying for it the sum of £1600. The streets were lined with enormous multitudes of people, who watched with eagerness the carriages slowly filing past, and cheered those occupants whom they delighted to honour. After the foreign and resident Ambassadors came the members of the Royal Family; then the Queen's barge-master, with forty-eight watermen, and next twelve royal carriages, with the ladies and gentlemen of the household. Next came the chief officers of the army, and the royal huntsmen, yeomen, prickers, marshalsmen, foresters, and other functionaries, the household troops mingling in the procession. The state coach, in which Her Majesty was seated, was drawn by eight cream-coloured horses, and the Duchess of Sutherland and the Earl of Albermarle accompanied the Queen. On either side of the carriage rode the Gold Stick-in-waiting, and the Captain of the Yeomen of the Guard. Other officers, attended by grooms, followed, and a squadron of Life Guards brought up the rear.

The route taken was from Buckingham Palace, up Constitution Hill, along Piccadilly, St. James' Street, Pall Mall, Cockspur Street, Charing Cross, Whitehall, and Parliament Street, to the great west door of Westminster Abbey.

The thousands of people who had been privileged with seats in the Abbey—some of which were high up among the arches, close to the roofs, and who had been seated in their cramped positions for so many hours, that at last the only sensation they were conscious of was an overwhelming desire to sleep—awoke to intense interest and attention when, at half-past eleven, a sudden burst of music rang through the Abbey. Miss Martineau thus describes the scene before the entrance of the Queen:—"The stone architecture contrasted finely with the gay colours of the multitude. From my high seat I commanded the whole north transept, the area with the throne, and many portions of galleries and the balconies which were called the vaultings. Except the mere sprinkling of oddities, everybody was in full dress. The scarlet of the military officers mixed in well, and the groups of the clergy were dignified: but to an unaccustomed eye, the prevalence of court dresses had a curious effect. I was perpetually taking whole groups of gentlemen for Quakers till I recollected myself. The Earl Marshall's assistants, called Gold Sticks, looked well from above, lightly fitting about in white breeches, silk stockings, blue-laced frocks, and white sashes. The throne covered, as was its foot-stool, with cloth of gold, stood on an elevation of four steps in front of the area. The first Peeress took her seat in the north transept opposite, at a quarter to seven, and three of the Bishops came next. From that time the Peers and their ladies arrived faster and faster. Each Peeress was conducted by two Gold Sticks, one of whom handed her to her seat, and the other bore and arranged her train on her lap, and saw that her coronet, foot-stool, and book were comfortably placed. . . . About nine o'clock the first gleams of the sun started into the Abbey, and presently travelled down to the Peeresses. I had never before seen the full effect of diamonds. As the light travelled, each lady shone out as a rainbow. The bright-

ness, vastness, and dreamy magnificence of the scene produced a strange effect of exhaustion and sleepiness. . . . The guns told when the Queen set forth, and there was unusual animation. The Gold Sticks flitted about ; there was tuning in the orchestra ; and the foreign Ambassadors and their suites arrived in quick succession. Prince Esterhazy, crossing a bar of sunshine, was the most prodigious rainbow of all. He was covered with diamonds and pearls ; and as he dangled his hat, it cast a dazzling radiance all around. . . . At half-past eleven the guns told that the Queen had arrived."

Her Majesty was met at the door by the great officers of state, the noblemen bore the regalia, and the Bishops carried the patina, chalice, and Bible. The Queen first retired to the robing-room, and then the procession formed, and proceeded toward the altar, on which was magnificent gold plate, and beside which was St. Edward's chair. The regalia, which is only shown on such occasions, was exhibited now—the St. Edward's staff, the golden spurs, the sceptre with the cross, the curtana, and two swords of investiture, were borne by the Duke of Roxburgh, Lord Byron, the Duke of Cleveland, Duke of Devonshire, Marquis of Westminster, and Duke of Sutherland. The coronets of the Princes of the blood were borne by noblemen, their trains by knights or peer's sons. The Earl Marshall, Duke of Norfolk, came next with the staff, Lord Melbourne with the sword of state, and the Duke of Wellington with his staff as Lord High Constable ; the Dukes of Richmond, Hamilton, and Somerset carried the sceptre and dove, St. Edward's crown, and the orb ; the Bishops of Bangor, Winchester, and London carried the patina, chalice, and Bible. The Queen, who was supported on one side by the Bishop of Bath and Wells, and on the other by the Bishop of Durham, was dressed in a royal robe of crimson velvet, trimmed with ermine and gold lace. On

her head was a circlet of gold, and eight young ladies of her own age, peers' daughters, bore her train. She was followed by about fifty ladies of rank, officers of state, and yeomen of the guard. Every one respectfully rose to their feet.

As Her Majesty passed up the choir, the anthem, "I was glad," rang through the Abbey, and then the boys of Westminster School, whose right it is on such occasions to occupy one of the galleries, chanted, "Vivat Victoria Regina." The Queen knelt down between the chair of homage and the altar; and then the recognition took place. The Archbishop of Canterbury said, "Sirs, I here present unto you Queen Victoria, the undoubted Queen of this realm, wherefore all of you who are come this day to do your homage, are you willing to do the same?" Whereupon everybody shouted, with one accord, "God save Queen Victoria."

The Archbishop then offered a prayer, and when the regalia had been laid on the altar, the Litany and Communion Services were read. A short sermon was preached by the Bishop of London, from the words, "*And the king stood in his place, and made a covenant before the Lord, to walk after the Lord, and to keep His commandments, and His testimonies, and His statutes, with all his heart and with all his soul, to perform the words of the covenant which are written in this book.*" After the sermon, the Archbishop administered the oath to the Queen, in which she promised to maintain the law and the established religion: and Her Majesty then went to the altar (the sword of state being carried before her) and said, her right hand placed on the Gospels, "The things which I have here-before promised I will perform and keep. So help me God." She then kissed the book and affixed her signature to the oath.

After this followed incidents even more picturesque than the former ones. The Queen sat in King Edward's chair, and four Knights of the Garter held over her a canopy of

cloth of gold. The Archbishop then anointed her head and hands, and pronounced a blessing upon her. Then the spurs, sword of state, and other insignia of royalty were handed to her Majesty: and next the crown was taken from the altar, and reverently placed upon the head of the Sovereign by the Archbishop. This was the moment when the interest of the ceremony became most intense. All the peers and peeresses put on their crowns, and a great excited shout arose of "God save the Queen." The trumpets were blown, the drums beaten, and the royal guns fired. Then followed the benediction and *Te Deum*; after which the Queen was "lifted," or enthroned, from St. Edward's chair into the chair of homage.

There she sat to receive the fealty of her distinguished subjects. The Archbishop came first, then the Princes of the blood, and next the Peers. The ceremony must have been somewhat tedious to the Queen, for there were seventeen dukes, twenty-two marquises, ninety-four earls, twenty viscounts, and ninety-two barons. Each peer knelt bare-headed before her, and kissed her hand. The oath of fealty was in these words, "I do become your liege-man of life and limb, and of earthly worship. And faith and truth I will bear to you against all manner of folk, so to live and die."

A story is told which reveals the kindly heart of the young woman who was receiving all this homage. Lord Rolle was an old man of upwards of eighty, and very feeble. He stumbled as he came up the steps, and nearly fell, when the Queen, acting upon the impulse of the moment, did what any other amiable girl would have done; she sprang from the throne (oblivious for the time of the fact that she was Queen, and ought to remain seated in stately unconcern), stepped forward, and held out her hand to help him, expressing a hope that he was not hurt.

The whole ceremony lasted four hours; and the Queen

must have been exceedingly glad when it was over. She had to entertain a hundred guests at dinner the same evening; and it is with a feeling of relief that we read of her going out on the roof of Buckingham Palace afterward to look at the fireworks.

Never was an oath taken with greater sincerity; never were promises more faithfully kept than those of the Queen. She has never forgotten the solemn obligations of her position. She has respected the rights of Parliament; she has upheld the British constitution; she has set her subjects an example of purity and goodness. "*Favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain, but a woman that feareth the Lord she shall be praised.*"





CHAPTER VI

Between the Crown and the King.

“And as the royal shouts went up, true spirits prayed between
The blessings happy monarchs have be thine, O crowned Queen.”

NOTWITHSTANDING the enthusiasm displayed at the accession and coronation of the Queen, the times in which she began her reign were not without disquiet and danger. Never has the strife of parties been stronger than then, nor political passion more violent. Justin McCarthy, in *Our Own Times*, says, “Some influential and prominent politicians talked and wrote as if there were really a possibility of the Tories attempting a revolution in favour of the Hanoverian branch of the royal family. On the other hand, there were heard loud and shrill cries that the Queen was destined to be conducted by her constitutional advisers into a precipitate pathway, leading sheer down into Popery and anarchy.” Mr. Henry Grattan said, at a public Protestant meeting in Dublin, “If her Majesty were once fairly placed in the hands of the Tories, I would not give an orange-peel for her life.” And Mr. Bradshaw, Conservative member for Canter-

bury, said of the Liberal Ministry then in power, "These are the men who represent the bigoted savages, hardly more civilised than the natives of New Zealand. Yet on these men are bestowed the countenance and support of the Queen of Protestant England." Although these men did not represent the true heart and voice of the country, their disaffection was real, and might have spread. It was a time when class was arrayed against class with much distinctness and animosity ; and there was great need of an influence that should be softening and conciliatory. Perhaps no one was so likely to exert this as the young Queen.

But near the very beginning of her reign there occurred the episode which has since gone by the name of the "Bed-chamber Plot," an incident which, in these days, excites nothing but amusement, but in those made considerable stir and agitation.

In May 1839, Lord Melbourne, who, at the time of the Queen's accession, was First Minister of the Crown, felt compelled, having only gained a majority of five on a question relating to Jamaica, to send in his resignation. That the Queen should regret this was only natural. It had fallen to the lot of Melbourne to advise and guide her Majesty when, in all the responsibility of her new position, she greatly needed counsel. He had proved himself courteous and kind to her. To him, and her uncle Sussex, she had left the selection of the ladies of the household ; and they—Whigs, both of them—had surrounded her with ladies of the Whig aristocracy. The heart of the young Queen was warm, and, as a matter of course, she became attached to these, the early friends and companions of her reign. It could not, then, be otherwise than disappointing and disquieting to be called upon to part with them.

In her emergency the Queen sent for the Duke of Wellington, to inquire what she must do, and he advised her to send for Sir Robert Peel, the leader of the Conservatives in

the House of Commons. She did so ; but her greeting of Peel was not very encouraging ; for, with the girlish frankness which was natural to her, she told him that although she yielded to constitutional usage, she was most sorry to part from her late Ministers, and she entirely approved of their conduct. Sir Robert Peel had enough good sense and kindliness to understand these outspoken words, and not to take offence at them. Of course her Majesty ought not to have uttered them ; but she was very young, and had not yet learned the lesson of silent acquiescence, which this very incident taught her so completely that she never made the same mistake again. Sir Robert proceeded to form his Cabinet, and submitted to the Queen a list of names, including those of the Duke of Wellington, Lords Lyndhurst, Aberdeen, Ellenborough, Stanley, Sir James Graham, and Mr. Goulburn. But when he turned his attention to the composition of the royal household, he was rather staggered to find that the two ladies in closest attendance upon the Queen were related to his greatest political antagonists. Peel knew that the chief troubles and difficulties of the Ministry would be those relating to Ireland. (When, indeed, has it been otherwise with any Ministry during the whole of the reign of the Queen ?) Under the Melbourne Ministry, Lord Normanby had been Lord-lieutenant of Ireland, and Lord Morpeth Irish Secretary. And the two ladies who occupied the most important positions in the household, and were the most familiar attendants on the Queen, were the wife of the Marquis of Normanby and the Duchess of Sutherland, the sister of Lord Morpeth. Under these circumstances Sir Robert asked for the resignation of these ladies, assuring her Majesty that he was most anxious to consult her wishes in regard to the selection of the ladies who were to fill the vacant positions. But the Queen told him that she should reserve to herself all such appointments, and that she did not at present intend to make any

change. This, after interviews, not only with Peel, but also with Wellington and Lord John Russell, she subsequently confirmed in the following note :—

“BUCKINGHAM PALACE, *May 10, 1839.*

“The Queen having considered the proposal made to her yesterday by Sir Robert Peel, to remove the Ladies of her Bed-chamber, cannot consent to adopt a course which she conceives to be contrary to usage, and repugnant to her feelings.”

Sir Robert Peel answered courteously and decisively :—
“Having had the opportunity, through your Majesty’s gracious consideration, of reflecting upon this point, he humbly submits to your Majesty that he is reluctantly compelled, by a sense of public duty and of the interest of your Majesty’s service, to adhere to the opinion which he ventured to express to your Majesty. He trusts he may be permitted, at the same time, to express to your Majesty his grateful acknowledgments for the distinction which your Majesty conferred upon him by requesting his advice and assistance in the attempt to form an Administration, and his earnest prayers that whatever arrangements your Majesty may be enabled to make for that purpose may be most conducive to your Majesty’s personal comfort and happiness, and to the promotion of the public welfare.”

Sir Robert thus put his case before the House :—“Is it fitting that one man shall be the Minister responsible for the most arduous charge that can fall to the lot of men, and that the wife of the other—that other his most formidable political enemy—shall, with his express consent, hold office in immediate attendance on the Sovereign? Oh, no! I felt it *was* impossible—I could not consent to this. . . . The public interests may suffer nothing by my abandonment of that high trust; the public interests may suffer nothing by my eternal exclusion from power; but the public interests would suffer, and I should be abandoning my duty to myself, my country, and, above all, to the Queen, my

Sovereign, if I were to consent to hold power on conditions which I felt to be—which I had the strongest conviction were—incompatible with the authority and with the duty of a Prime Minister.”

Probably to-day there is but one opinion respecting the affair, and that is, that Sir Robert was right and our Queen was wrong; but it was the only constitutional sin that Her Majesty has ever committed, and perhaps no one loved or admired her the less for it. It came about because the Queen, in the impulsiveness of her youth, consulted her heart more than her head, and her Majesty has ever since been exceedingly careful not in the least to deviate from her rule of strict neutrality in politics, and has never sought to place her own wishes before, or in opposition to, those of the Ministry and the nation.

Of course, the incident was the occasion of a vast amount of talk in the House of Commons, and criticism in the country. Lord Melbourne, who was asked to return to office, said, “I resume office unequivocally and solely for this reason, that I will not desert my Sovereign in a situation of difficulty and distress, especially when a demand is made upon her Majesty with which, I think, she ought not to comply; a demand inconsistent with her personal honour, and which, if acquiesced in, would render her reign liable to all the changes and variations of political parties, and make her domestic life one constant scene of unhappiness and discomfort.” It is known now that there was a misunderstanding on both sides. The Tory party was suspicious that “a tottering Ministry owed its continuance in office to the personal predilections of the Sovereign.” On the other hand, Sir Robert Peel did not make himself properly understood by the Queen; nor had he sufficient sympathy with her in the novelty of her position. It was impossible to find a precedent on such a question; for since the reign of the last Queen, the idea of constitutional and ministerial

government had been greatly developed. As for the Sovereigns who had preceded Victoria, they had not been carefully loyal to their Ministers, nor impartial in their regard for the two great political parties in the land; and, altogether, the little mistake which her Majesty made in the beginning of her reign was somewhat excusable, and has certainly been condoned.

Sir Theodore Martin says, "It cannot be denied that the young Queen's warm personal regard for Lord Melbourne, and for the adherents of his administration, who had surrounded her Majesty since her accession, had not unnaturally caused her to drift insensibly into political partisanship, and to forget for a time the obvious, but, up to that time, much neglected doctrine inculcated upon her by her uncle, and practised by himself in Belgium with marked success, that it is the paramount duty of a constitutional monarch to maintain a position of neutrality towards the leaders of party on both sides. The continuance of the state of things to which this led must have been productive of consequences the most mischievous; and to avert such a result, as well, probably, as to close the life of dazzling and continuous excitement which the Queen has herself pronounced to be detrimental to all natural feelings and affections, those who had her welfare most at heart were anxious to secure for her, without longer delay, a husband's guidance and support."

And it was by the wise advice of the Prince, who became the husband of the Queen, that such another affair as the Bed-chamber Plot became ever afterward impossible: for it was settled that on any change of Ministry the Queen would receive the suggestions of any new Prime Minister respecting the composition of her household, and that ladies so closely related to the retiring ministers as to make their presence inconvenient, should "retire of their own accord."

Several interesting stories are told of the Queen at this

time. In the Life of Leslie the painter there are frequent references to her Majesty, whose picture he was engaged to paint.—“The Queen has sat five times. She is now so far satisfied with the likeness that she does not wish me to touch it again. She sat not only for the face, but for as much as is seen of the figure, and for the hands, with the coronation ring on her finger. Her hands, by-the-bye, are very pretty; the backs dimpled, and the fingers delicately shaped.” . . . “I received six hundred guineas for the Queen’s picture. This was the price fixed by myself, and which I had previously named to the gentleman I was to paint it for, before she expressed a wish to have it. I did not think it right to ask the Queen more. Never was sovereign who spent royal money in a way more creditable to the spender than she does—and this is great praise.”

In Lord Campbell’s *Autobiography and Letters*, he says, “The little Queen was exceedingly civil to me, and said that she had heard from the Duchess of Gloucester that I had the most beautiful children in the world. She asked me how many we had; and when she heard seven, she seemed rather appalled, considering this a number that she would never be able to reach. She seems in perfect health, and is as merry and playful as a kitten.” “I was several hours at the Queen’s ball last night, a scene never to be forgotten. The Queen was in great spirits, and danced with more than usual gaiety. She received Peel with great civility. . . . All flattery apart, the Queen is a most extraordinary woman.”

Miss Fox tells us that Lord Albermarle “perpetrated a right merry quibble.” “I wonder,” said the Queen once, “if my good people of London are as glad to see me as I am to see them;” whereupon his lordship pointed to the device “V.R.”—(We are.)



CHAPTER VII.

Courtship and Love.

“Treu und Fest.”—(*True and Firm.*)

THE course of true love did not at first run altogether smoothly even in the case of such august personages as Queen Victoria and Prince Albert. Her Majesty was only twenty; and when the movement and excitement of the court—so different from the quiet life she had lived at Kensington—was commenced, she seems quite naturally to have put away from her all thoughts of marriage. The Prince was one of the first to congratulate her on her accession.—“Now you are Queen of the mightiest land of Europe; in your hand lies the happiness of millions. May Heaven assist you, and strengthen you with its strength in the high but difficult task! I hope that your reign may be long, happy, and glorious; and that your efforts may be rewarded by the thankfulness and love of your subjects.”

The Queen herself says that she never had any idea that if she married at all it would be any one else than the Prince; but she was not ready for marriage, when at the beginning

of the year 1838, her uncle told her it would be well to make some decisive arrangement for the next year. She wrote to King Leopold that she wished for delay. She was too young. So also was the Prince; and as he was still under age, her people would consider a marriage with him premature. "Moreover, his mastery of the English language was still very imperfect, and if he was to take up a proper position in England, it was important that this defect should be remedied; and that he should, also, have a wider experience, more practised habits of observation, and more self-reliance than it was possible he could, up to that time, have acquired."

All this was very sensible and true, but it was not quite what the kindly match-makers wanted. King Leopold was obliged to convey to his nephew the news that he must wait. "I have had a long conversation with Albert," wrote the uncle to Stockmar. "I have put the whole case honestly and kindly before him. I told him that it would be necessary to postpone the marriage for a few years. . . . I find him very sensible on all these points. But he made one just remark—"I am ready," he said, "to submit to this delay if I have only some certain assurance to go upon. But if, after waiting, perhaps, for three years, I should find that the Queen no longer desired the marriage, it would place me in a ridiculous position, and would, to a certain extent, ruin all my prospects for the future."

There is no doubt that the Prince was disappointed and anxious; but he did the best thing possible, he went away to Italy. "In Florence, the Prince continued his active and studious habits, rising at six and working till noon, dining simply at two o'clock, when his drink was water, and going to bed as a rule at nine. Music occupied much of his attention. He played well on both the piano and organ, and he would often resort to the church of the Badia, when it was closed to the public, to play on its fine

organ." From Florence he went to Rome, and had an interview with the Pope (Gregory XVI.) "We conversed," writes the Prince, "in Italian, on the influence the Egyptians had had on Greek art, and that again on Roman art. The Pope asserted that the Greeks had taken their models from the Etruscans. In spite of his infallibility I ventured to assert that they had derived their lessons in art from the Egyptians." From Rome the Prince went to Naples and saw Pompeii; then back to Milan, Rome, Tivoli, Viterbo, Sienna, Leghorn, and Genoa.

"Meanwhile" (*Life of the Prince Consort*) "the current of events in England made it desirable that the question of the marriage of the Queen should be again pressed. So long as her Majesty's choice was not avowedly fixed, the disposal of her hand could not fail to be an object of family or dynastic ambition and of diplomatic intrigue. Nor were busy schemers wanting, whose views as to the fitting husband for the Queen were influenced by considerations very different from those which, as we have seen, governed King Leopold in his selection of Prince Albert. Their intrigues—intrigues from within as well as from without—were not unobserved; and although, from their very nature, such projects could not be otherwise than futile, still their mere existence was a cause of annoyance, and they might, if persevered in, have become a source of serious disquietude. To put an end to them, at once and for ever, was therefore an object of importance."

It was decided in the autumn of 1839 that the Princes Ernest and Albert should pay a visit to England. Albert did not hope much even from this, for he wrote to a friend: "The Queen declared to my uncle of Belgium that she wished the affair to be considered as broken off, and that for four years she would think of no marriage. I mean, therefore, with quiet but firm resolution, to declare, on my part, that I also entirely withdraw."

Coy modesty on the one hand, and dignity on the other, might have kept these two young people apart for some time, had not something more mighty stepped in to prevent.

The two cousins reached Windsor Castle on the 10th of October 1839. The Queen gave them a royal reception, meeting them at the top of the grand staircase ; and the first glance sufficed to assure her that the young knight who desired her love was exceedingly worthy. The Queen had not seen her cousin for three years, and since that time a great improvement had taken place in him. He was tall, handsome, and manly. He had clear blue eyes and an expressive forehead ; and an expression of countenance in which great gentleness, intelligence, and depth of thought were mingled. There was something in him that at once declared the high character that he possessed ; and the young Queen was the first to see and acknowledge his worth. He and his brother brought with them this significant letter from their uncle, King Leopold :—

“MY DEAREST VICTORIA,—Your cousins will themselves be the bearers of these lines. I recommend them to you. They are good and honest creatures, deserving your kindness, not pedantic, but really sensible and trustworthy. I have told them that your great wish is that they should be quite at their ease with you.”

It was found that, although the princes had arrived, their clothes had not. The Queen writes in her Journal “that they could not appear at dinner in consequence of this, but they came in after it, in spite of their morning clothes.”

And a very happy time they all spent together in old Windsor, during that beautiful October ! Other guests had been invited, and every one tried to make the visit of the princes a pleasant one. Of course, curious and kindly eyes watched eagerly for the dawn of love in the two young persons, in whom the most intense interest was concentrated. They supposed that they had put far from them all thoughts

of love and marriage ; they were to be friends, cousins, and nothing more, at least for a long time. And so they were gay and bright together, and merry and light-hearted from morning to night. The Queen breakfasted in her own room, and afterwards received her cousins. At two o'clock they had luncheon together, the Duchess of Kent joining them. "In the afternoon they all rode, the Queen, and Duchess, and the two Princes, with Lord Melbourne and most of the ladies and gentlemen in attendance, forming a large cavalcade. There was a great dinner every evening, with a dance after it three times a week."

On the second day after his arrival the Queen wrote to her uncle : "The young men are very amiable, delightful companions, and I am very happy to have them here. Albert's beauty is most striking, and he is most amiable and unaffected—in short, very fascinating."

It took less than a week for the chivalrous young knight to win his bride. He was graceful and devoted in his attentions to her ; he never willingly absented himself from her ; and in a dozen ways conveyed to her the fact of his attachment. As to the Queen, she soon confessed to herself that the love of such a man was more than the homage of courtiers or the applause of a world ; and that life without him would fail to bring content. All her unwillingness had melted away, and all her heart went out to him, as they rode or talked together in those never-to-be-forgotten autumnal days.

But the difficulty was how to let him know this ; for in the case of these lovers it was the lady and not the gentleman who must speak first. He was almost portionless ; and how could he venture to pay his addresses to the greatest Queen in Europe ? But then she was an English maiden, and how could she so far deviate from the traditions of her race as to show her preference unasked ?

What a dilemma they were in ! But they contrived to

come out of it in some way or other ; though exactly how it was managed will perhaps never be known.

There was a story afloat at the time, which said that at one of the Palace balls, the Queen, at the conclusion of a dance, presented the Prince with a flower. The significance of this act was not by any means lost upon him. He wore a close-fitting uniform, buttoned up to the throat ; but he wished to wear the Queen's gift upon his heart, so it is said that with a penknife he cut a slit in his coat, and placed the precious flower in it.

Again, the Prince was on one occasion thanking her Majesty for the gracious reception she had given him, and expressing the delight his visit was producing, when the Queen replied, "If indeed your highness is so much pleased with this country, perhaps you would not object to remaining in it, and making it your home?"

This hint would be more than enough for any man ; and if the story be true, there is no doubt that it filled the heart of the young German with great joy. He himself stated in a letter to his grandmother :—"The Queen sent for me to her room, and disclosed to me, in a genuine outburst of love and affection, that I had gained her whole heart."

What followed can be better imagined than described ; for there were no witnesses of the sacred love-revealing scene, which was given to these as to millions of other young folk who make their choice for better for worse. As soon as the first glad agitation had passed away, they sent for the good brother Ernest, and confided to him the happy truth that they cared for each other ; and he gave them his kind and warm congratulations. Then Lord Melbourne was told, and he expressed great satisfaction on behalf of himself and the country.

"You will be much more comfortable," he said ; "for a woman cannot stand alone for any time in whatever position she may be."

To King Leopold the news was indeed welcome. The Queen herself wrote and confessed the truth to him, adding, "These last few days have passed like a dream to me, and I am so much bewildered by it all that I hardly know how to write; but I do feel very happy." As soon as possible his joyous response was sent to the Queen. "I had, when I learned your decision, almost the feeling of old Simeon, 'Now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace.' Your choice has been, for these last years, my conviction of what might and would be the best for your happiness. . . . In your position, which may, and will, perhaps, become in future even more difficult in a political point of view, you could not exist without having a happy and agreeable *interieur*. And I am much deceived (which I think I am not) or you will find in Albert just the very qualities and disposition which are indispensable for your happiness, and which will suit your own character, temper, and mode of life."

The Prince wrote, apparently in as great a haze of happiness as the Queen herself, "Victoria is so good and kind to me, that I am often puzzled to believe that I should be the object of so much affection. I know the interest you take in my happiness, and therefore pour out my heart to you." The letter was to Baron Stockmar. "More, or more seriously, I cannot write. I am at this moment too much bewildered to do so."

'Heaven opens on the ravished eye,
The heart is all entranced in bliss.'

Stockmar, in his reply, not only congratulated the Prince, but sent him some excellent counsel, which Albert received, as he always did, with a great desire to profit by it. He knew that his friend was exceedingly anxious that he, Albert, should prove "noble, manly, and princely" in all things, and this was the Prince's earnest desire too. He knew that he was choosing a position of no ordinary difficulty

and responsibility ; but he coveted rather than shrank from it. " With the exception of my relations to the Queen, my future position will have its dark sides, and the sky will not always be blue and unclouded. But life has its thorns in every position, and the consciousness of having used one's powers and endeavours for an object so great as that of promoting the welfare of so many, will surely be sufficient to support me."

Real love is always humble. The Queen wrote in her diary, " How I will strive to make him feel as little as possible the great sacrifice he has made ! I told him it *was* a great sacrifice on his part, but he would not allow it." The feeling is so natural, so womanly, so exactly what every good girl must feel to whom has been given the priceless boon of a good man's love that it endears our Queen to all hearts.

The happy young people had a month together ; and then, everyone counselling an early union, the Princes returned to Germany ; and they had to continue their courting during the short time that was left to them through love-letters. Here is an interesting one from the Prince to the Duchess of Kent, written during his absence :—

" DEAREST AUNT,—A thousand thanks for your two dear letters just received ! I see from them that you are in close sympathy with your nephew—your son-in-law soon to be—which gratifies me very very much. All you say strikes me as very true, as emanating from a heart as wise as it is kind. I regret, as you do, that I have not still some months at command to prepare myself for my new position—a position new to me in so many ways ; yet, what little time I have shall not fail to be turned to account, if they will allow me a moment's leisure in Coburg from other matters.

" What you say about my poor little bride, sitting all alone in her room, silent and sad, has touched me to the heart. Oh, that I might fly to her side to cheer her !

"You wish me to give you something I have worn. I send you the ring which you gave me at Kensington, on Victoria's birthday in 1836. From that time it has never left my finger! Its very shape proclaims that it has been squeezed in the grasp of many a manly hand. It has your name upon it, but the name is Victoria's too; and I beg you to wear it in remembrance of her and of myself.

"Our stay in Wiesbaden will be brief, for we expect to start from home the day after to-morrow. We stayed for a couple of hours in Bonn, visited our little home there, and then gave a luncheon to our old masters, who received us with great cordiality.

"Now farewell, dearest Aunt, and continue your love for your devoted Nephew,

"ALBERT."

The "poor little bride" was cheered with many tender words from her lover; and she needed them, for the work that was before her was more difficult than that which lay before him. He had, indeed, to part from all that was dear to him, and to break away from home and kindred; and she had to prepare the way for his coming.

One of the most trying parts she had to perform was to tell her love-story to the Privy Councillors. She was some time before she could nerve herself to the duty. At last they were summoned, and on the 23rd of November, knowing the occasion to be an important one, eighty-three gentlemen assembled in the bow-room, on the ground-floor in Buckingham Palace. Naturally, for she had a girl's heart, though she was royal, it was with considerable trepidation that the Queen went alone to meet them. But she wore on her wrist a bracelet which the Prince had given her, and which contained his portrait, and she looked at it to give her courage.

She has herself related what took place:—"Precisely at two I went in. The room was full, but I hardly knew who was there. Lord Melbourne I saw looking kindly at me,

with tears in his eyes, but he was not near me. I then read my short declaration. I felt that my hands shook, but I did not make one mistake. I felt most happy and thankful when it was over. Lord Landsdowne then rose, and in the name of the Privy Council asked that this most gracious and most welcome communication might be printed. I then left the room, the whole thing not taking above two or three minutes. The Duke of Cambridge came into the small library where I was standing, and wished me joy."

The declaration was as follows:—"I have caused you to be summoned at the present time in order that I may acquaint you with my resolution in a matter which deeply concerns the welfare of my people and the happiness of my future life. It is my intention to ally myself in marriage with the Prince Albert of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha. Deeply impressed with the solemnity of the engagement which I am about to contract, I have not come to this decision without mature consideration, nor without feeling a strong assurance that, with the blessing of Almighty God, it will at once secure my domestic felicity and serve the interests of my country. I have thought fit to make this resolution known to you at the earliest period, in order that you may be apprised of a matter so highly important to me and to my kingdom, and which, I persuade myself, will be most acceptable to all my loving subjects."

But a still more trying ordeal had to be passed through when the Queen met Parliament, and repeated, in the presence of so many, the story which she had already told. But she was comforted by the assurance that not only was the union she was about to form pleasing to her Ministers, but her people also approved of it. It was on a cold, wintry morning in January that the Queen went from Windsor to Westminster, but crowds of people were waiting at every step to give loyal demonstrations of their sympathy. Every seat in the House of Lords was

occupied ; and when the Queen made her statement, every voice replied in sympathy and congratulation. Sir Robert Peel expressed the truth when he said, "It frequently happens that political considerations interfere with such transactions, and that persons in exalted stations are obliged to sacrifice their private feelings to the sense of public duty. Her Majesty, however, has the singular good fortune to be able to gratify her private feelings while she performs her public duty, and to obtain the best guarantee for happiness by contracting an alliance founded on affection."

The fact that the Queen's was a real love match made all the nation glad, and her Majesty's warmth and feeling, blended with her maidenly modesty, won the greatest admiration.

But, nevertheless, there were incidents just before the wedding that troubled the Queen very greatly.

Certain questions had to be considered in Parliament ; and through the mismanagement of the Ministers, and the provocation of the Opposition, there was a great deal that was annoying and painful connected with the discussion. An absurd rumour had got abroad in some circles that the Prince was a Roman Catholic. The declaration had not mentioned the fact that he was a Protestant. If Lord Melbourne thought of it at all, he no doubt supposed that people would know that that branch of the Saxon family had always been very pronounced Protestants. The Prince, writing to the Queen, said, "In accordance with your wish we have set about the preparation of an historical sketch of the progenitors of our house, so as to show at once the position towards the Reformation and Protestantism. It is not yet complete, but it shall be sent with my next letter, and demonstrate that to the house of Saxony Protestantism, in a measure, owes its existence, for this house, and that of the Landgrave of Hesse, stood quite alone against Europe, and upheld Luther and his cause triumphantly. This shows

the folly of constantly assailing our house as Papistical. So little is this the case, that there has not been a single Catholic princess introduced into the Coburg family since the appearance of Luther in 1521. Moreover, the Elector Frederick the Wise of Saxony was the very first Protestant that ever lived. That you may know and judge for yourself, dear Victoria, what my creed and religious principles are, I send you a confession of faith which I worked out for myself in 1835, and which I then publicly avowed and swore to in our High Church. I enclose an English copy, and the original as I then wrote it. You will see my hand is somewhat changed since then."

It would have saved a good deal of annoyance and ill-feeling if her Majesty's Ministers had mentioned the fact earlier than they did.

The discussion which arose on the question of the annuity to be settled on the Prince was more unpleasant still. The times were bad, and there was a great deal of commercial distress in the country. But if the Opposition had been taken into the confidence of the Ministers, there was no doubt that more money would have been forthcoming to the Prince than was voted to him. Fifty thousand pounds a-year was the sum granted to Queen Caroline, wife of George II.; Queen Charlotte, wife of George III.; Queen Adelaide, wife of William IV.; and Prince Leopold, the husband of the Princess Charlotte. Lord Melbourne, therefore, proposed that the same sum should be granted to Prince Albert. But Mr. Hume, the economist, proposed that it should be reduced to £21,000. This was negatived; but an amendment was carried by two hundred and sixty-two, to one hundred and fifty-eight, on the motion of Colonel Sibthorp, which was supported by Sir Robert Peel, which reduced it to £30,000. Lord Melbourne said afterwards to Stockmar, "The Prince will be very angry at the Tories, but it is not the Tories only whom the Prince has to thank

for cutting down his allowance. It is rather the Tories, the Radicals, and a great porportion of our own people."

Sir Theodore Martin says:—"The Prince, however, was not angry with the Tories, and did not for a moment allow what had passed to influence his future conduct. He was at Aix-la-Chapelle, on his way to England, when he learned the result of the debate. A misgiving crossed his mind, and caused him no little distress, that the English people were not pleased with the marriage. But, fortunately, he found awaiting him at Brussels a letter prompted by the sympathetic thoughtfulness of Stockmar, with full details of what had taken place, and, which was of more importance, with an impartial statement of the causes, in no way personal to himself, which had led to the miscarriage of the vote. The Prince, with his wonted clear perception and cool judgment, at once appreciated the position, and replied to Stockmar that his only regret was to find that his ability to help artists and men of learning and science, to which he had been looking forward with delight, would be necessarily more restricted than he had hoped."

The good sense of the young Prince was manifested in the way in which he received this and other rebuffs, which would considerably have ruffled the feelings of smaller men. The Houses of Parliament do not appear to have cared very much either for the feelings of the Queen or the Prince. Her Majesty was very naturally pained that any slight should have been shown to her betrothed, though perhaps she cared less for the money question than for the other respecting the position of the Prince, which had to be discussed in the House of Lords. The Bill brought simply dealt with the naturalisation of the Prince; but it contained a clause which gave him "precedence for life next after her Majesty, in Parliament or elsewhere, as her Majesty might think proper." The Duke of Wellington and Lord Brougham raised great objection to this clause, and eventually the Bill

simply provided for the naturalisation of the Prince. Baron Stockmar had been most anxious that the question should be definitely settled ; and if it had been, it would have saved the Queen a vast amount of after-pain and annoyance.

Perhaps the Prince was not yet altogether popular ; he required to be better known by the people than he could possibly be before his residence in order to be implicitly loved and trusted. But eventually all obstacles were smoothed away ; and the bride and bridegroom, comforted by each other's love, contemplated with pleasure the approach of the day of their marriage.

During the years that followed the country had almost as much reason as the Queen to honour the man .

“ Who revered his conscience as his king ;
Whose glory was redressing human wrong :
Who spake no slander, no, nor listened to it ;
Who loved one only, and who clave to her ! ”





CHAPTER VIII.

The Wedding.

"Heart, are you great enough
For a love that never tires!"

AS merry as marriage bells" is a proverbial saying, and a wedding naturally brings gladness everywhere. And yet there are deeper feelings than those of mirth, which frequently predominate in the minds of those to whom the day is most full of significance. It must have been so with the young German Prince. The circumstances that had occurred, with reference to his income, etc., must have taken off the bloom and brightness of hope considerably; and the demonstrations of loyalty and affection which had been showered upon him by his own people, made the pain of parting from his native land the greater. But no events had power really to overshadow the joy of the Prince. "All I have to say is, that while I possess your love, they cannot make me unhappy."

So he had written to the Queen, and the thought of her urged him onward.

He set out from Gotha on the 28th of January, accom-

panied by Lord Torrington and Colonel Grey, who had been sent to invest him with the insignia of the Garter, and bring him in proper state to England. At Calais they were met by Lord Clarence Paget, the commander of the *Firebrand*, in which vessel the Prince was conveyed to England. If any doubt remained in his mind as to the pleasure the people of his adopted country really felt in the marriage, it was dispelled on his arrival at Dover. Crowds thronged the quays and lined the streets, and were everywhere most enthusiastic in their greetings. The hearty welcome which met him at Dover "followed him along the route to Canterbury, where he passed the evening of the 7th, and continued with ever-increasing ardour until he alighted at Buckingham Palace, on the afternoon of the 8th. The greetings of the English people are never given in a half-hearted way; and if the cheers of the crowds who streamed out from every town, village, and hamlet, along the route, and who thronged the avenues of the Palace that day and the next, had a more cordial ring than usual, what wonder when all saw, in the well-graced and distinguished presence of the Prince, the fairest promise of the home-happiness of the Queen, and for the prosperity of her reign?"

They reached Buckingham Palace on Saturday afternoon, the 8th of February, and the Prince found his bride "standing with her mother at the door, ready to be the first to meet and to greet him." On the same day the Lord Chamberlain attended to administer to him the oath of naturalisation, by which act he became the Queen's subject; and the same evening a grand dinner was given to the Prince, the Ministers, and the great officers of state. Formal visits had to be paid to all the members of the Royal Family on the following day; and then the wedding-day, Monday, the 10th of February, dawned. In the morning the Prince wrote to his stepmother and his grandmother:—"In less than three hours I shall stand before the altar with my dear

bride. In these solemn moments I must once more ask your blessing, which I am well assured I shall receive, and which will be my safeguard and my future joy. I must end. God be my stay !”

The morning was cold, foggy, and wet ; but such crowds had not assembled in St. James's Park and its approaches since the rejoicings at the visit of the Allied Sovereigns in 1814, and even the inclement weather could not damp the joy of the Queen's subjects.

The wedding was celebrated with all due magnificence in the Chapel Royal, St. James's. The altar was splendidly decorated, and laden with gold plate. Four state chairs were set—one for the Queen, one for Prince Albert, and one each for the Queen-Dowager and the Duchess of Kent.

The first carriages that drove along the Mall conveyed the ladies and gentlemen of the royal household from Buckingham Palace to St. James's. Next came the bridegroom and his retinue. He was dressed as a British field-marshal, and he wore the insignia of the Garter, the jewels of which had been the Queen's own present. He was accompanied by his father and brother, both in military uniforms. The calm grace and thoughtful dignity of the Prince moved all hearts ; and the men clapped their hands, and the ladies waved their handkerchiefs in loyal enthusiasm as he passed. “The colonnade within the Palace, along which the bridal procession had to pass and repass, had been filled since early morn by the *élite* of England's rank and beauty. Each side of the way was a parterre of white robes, white, relieved with blue, white and green, amber, crimson, purple, fawn, and stone colour. All wore wedding favours of lace, orange-flower blossoms, or silver bullion, some of great size, and many in most exquisite taste. Most of the gentlemen were in court dress ; and the scene, during the patient hours of waiting, was made picturesque by the passing to and fro, in various garbs, of burly yeomen of the Guards,

armed with their massive halberts; slight-built gentlemen-at-arms, with partisans of equal slighthness; elderly pages of state and pretty pages of honour; officers of the Lord Chamberlain and officers of the Woods and Forests; heralds all embroidery and cuirassiers in polished steel; prelates in their rochets and priests in their stoles; and singing boys in their surplices of virgin white." *

The Queen was received with "tremendous shouts" as she drove from Buckingham Palace to St. James's. Her eyes were bent upon the ground; and it was noticed that she looked extremely pale and anxious, though she could not help smiling at two or three incidents in the crowd that arrested her attention. She was dressed in rich white satin, trimmed with orange-flower blossoms. On her head was a wreath of orange-blossoms, and over it a veil of rich Honiton lace, which fell about her face, but did not conceal it. Even on that day it was not forgotten that she belonged to the people, and must be seen by them. Her jewels were the collar of the Order of the Garter, and a diamond necklace and ear-rings. She had twelve bridesmaids—the Ladies Adelaide Paget, Sarah Villiers, Frances Cowper, Elizabeth West, Mary Grimston, Eleanor Paget, Caroline Lennox, Elizabeth Howard, Ida Hay, Catherine Stanhope, Jane Bouverie, and Mary Howard. The marriage ceremony was performed by the Archbishops of Canterbury and York, and the Bishop of London.

The Duchess of Kent appeared very distressed and disconsolate; but the Queen and the Prince were quiet and confident, and spoke the usual significant and solemn words to each other, and the crowd of witnesses, with all earnestness and intensity of meaning. It was a picture on which the imagination delights to dwell, that of the young Queen uttering her vow in all meekness and sincerity, while a hundred thousand hearts prayed for God's blessing to rest

* *Life of Queen Victoria.*

upon her ; but no one has ever put the picture into words more beautiful than those of the lady who is rightly called the Queen of Song—Elizabeth Barrett Browning :—

“ But now before her people's face she bendeth her's anew,
 And calls them, while she vows, to be her witness thereunto.
 She vowed to rule, and in that oath her childhood put away :
 She doth maintain her womanhood in vowing love to-day.
 O lovely lady ! let her vow ! such lips become such vows,
 And fairer goeth bridal wreath than crown with vernal brows.
 O lovely lady ! let her vow ! yea, let her vow to love !
 And though she be no less a Queen, with purples hung above,
 The pageant of a court behind, the royal kin around,
 And woven gold to catch her looks turned maidenly to ground ;
 Yet may the bride-veil hide from her a little of that state,
 While loving hopes for retinues about her sweetness wait.
 She vows to love who vowed to rule (the chosen at her side),
 Let none say, God preserve the Queen ! but rather, Bless the Bride !
 None blow the trump, none bend the knee, none violate the dream,
 Wherein no monarch, but a wife, she to herself may seem.
 Or, if ye say, Preserve the Queen ! oh, breathe it inward low—
 She is a *woman*, and *beloved* ! and 'tis enough but so.
 Count it enough, thou noble Prince, who tak'st her by the hand,
 And claimest for thy lady-love our lady of the land !
 And since, Prince Albert, men have called thy spirit high and rare,
 And true to truth, and brave for truth, as some at Augsburg were.
 We charge thee by thy lofty thoughts, and by thy poet-mind,
 Which not by glory and degree takes measures of mankind,
 Esteem that wedded hand less dear for sceptre than for ring,
 And hold her uncrowned womanhood to be the royal thing.

And now upon our Queen's last vow what blessings shall we pray ?
 None straitened to a shallow crown will suit our lips to-day :
 Behold, they must be free as love, they must be broad as free,
 Even to the borders of heaven's light and earth's humanity.
 Long live she ! send up loyal shouts, and true hearts pray between,
 ‘ *The blessings happy peasants have, be thine, O crowned Queen !* ’ ”

The blessing of loving and being loved, which, after all, is the greatest blessing which any can have in this world, was certainly given to Queen Victoria. As soon as the ceremony

of the marriage was finished, the Queen went hastily to the other side of the altar and kissed the Queen-Dowager. She then took Prince Albert's hand, which she held as they passed down the aisle, and until they had reached Buckingham Palace. People noticed that he held her hand so as to show the wedding-ring on the finger of his bride; and they noticed, too, that the Queen had lost all her nervousness and paleness, and that a flush of joy was upon her face as she entered her own halls. Lady Lyttleton, who, as one of the ladies-in-waiting, had opportunities of observing her Majesty, says: "The Queen's look and manner were very pleasing, her eyes much swollen with tears, but great happiness in her countenance, and her look of confidence and comfort, when they walked away as man and wife, was very pleasing to see. I understand she is in extremely high spirits since. Such a new thing for her to dare to be unguarded in conversing with anybody; and with her frank and fearless nature, the restraints she has hitherto been under, from one reason or another, with everybody, must have been most painful."

The wedding breakfast was at Buckingham Palace, and the wedding cake was a most wonderful production. It is said to have been three hundred pounds in weight, fourteen inches in depth, and three yards in circumference. It was ornamented with a device in sugar of Britannia blessing the bride and bridegroom. A dog reposed at the feet of the Prince, and a pair of turtle doves at the feet of the Queen. Numbers of Cupids were placed around, one of whom was supposed to be registering the marriage in a book; and several bouquets of white flowers, tied with true-lovers' knots, also adorned the cake.

In the afternoon the young couple left Buckingham Palace, to spend a short honeymoon at Windsor. The Queen's travelling dress was of white satin, trimmed with swans' down, and she wore a white bonnet. She received

enthusiastic cheers as the carriage passed up Constitution Hill, and bowed her acknowledgments with even more graciousness than usual. The day, which had been somewhat gloomy, grew bright and cheerful in the afternoon, and her Majesty had the fine weather, which has since become proverbial, for her journey. When they reached Windsor they found the little place gaily illuminated, and all the Eton boys waiting to give them welcome. Indeed, the entire journey from London to Windsor had been through lines of interested spectators, everyone of whom felt a kindly interest in the newly-wedded pair; and many of whom poured out their loving wishes in prayer to God that He would bless them and make them happy. All hoped that the "Till death us do part," meant a longer time than it has proved to be; but even the shadow that has fallen upon the Queen cannot rob her of the bright days that she had with her beloved husband, though it has added a deeper significance to the universal wish, "God bless her!"





CHAPTER IX.

Beginning Life Together.

“No lot below
For one whole day eludeth care.”

THE times were not all quiet and good in which our Queen and her husband began their life together. While she was yet alone upon the throne, there had been dark clouds gathering, and some storms had broken over the land. There were Canadian difficulties of no light kind, nor easy of solution. Thorn and his disciples caused much disturbance in Kent. Thorn, who was no doubt a madman, went about in Canterbury and other places proclaiming himself Sir William Courtenay of Powderham Castle, Knight of Malta, King of Jerusalem, the king of all the gipsy races, and at last a second Messiah. He professed to be a political reformer, and who does that is sure to have followers, especially if he be wise enough to attack some law that seems to press heavily. The agricultural labourers of Kent were won over to him by his denunciation of the Poor Law; and he actually induced a crowd of his supporters to make an

attack on Canterbury. Thorn and several of his disciples were slain in the fight with the soldiers that ensued.

But the Chartist movement was a bigger and more serious thing.

The Reform Bill, which gave to the middle classes the enfranchisement that they asked for, had left the great masses of the working people as they were before it. In 1835 a season of great commercial depression set in ; then followed several bad harvests, the falling off of the manufactures of the country, and, as a natural consequence, great suffering among the people, from the almost famine-prices of food. As is generally the case, the sufferers looked about to find some one or some thing upon whom they could fix the blame, and an idea sprang up that, if they could have a more direct influence upon the Government, their troubles would be lessened. In 1838, fiery orators went through the country, endeavouring to arouse the people to make some violent struggle for their rights ; and a committee, composed of six members of parliament and six working-men, was formed. They prepared a Bill called the People's Charter, which demanded, 1st, the extension of the right of voting to every man ; 2d, equal electoral districts ; 3d, vote by ballot ; 4th, annual parliaments ; 5th, no property qualification for members ; 6th, payment of members of Parliament for their services. It will be seen that some of these demands were not unreasonable, and have, indeed, been complied with ; but there were outbreaks at Newport, Birmingham, and other places, which caused very serious disturbance. In London alone, two hundred thousand special constables had to be enrolled. Yet some of the men who were leaders were not only clever, but great—Feargus O'Connor, Thomas Cooper, and Henry Vincent, were names that carried power with them ; only, unfortunately, the mob went into wilder excesses than their leaders intended or wished. That which was unlawful in the agitation had

to be firmly suppressed, for it was the cause of real danger and anxiety: and then Chartism gradually died away, leaving behind it probably more than a small residuum of good. Besides Chartism there were hurricanes, and fires, and many events to sadden the beginning of the married life of the two personages whose private life was so much affected by outward circumstances.

On the other hand, they had got married in a time of great progress. Experiments had been made in regard to electricity and steam, which introduced a new era. Ships of enormous size had been built and worked by steam, and it was mentioned as a wonderful thing that the *Great Western* crossed the ocean from Bristol to New York in fifteen days. The system of the Penny Post was introduced, and in order to show how all great movements are affected by the domestic relations of the people, we give a story which was related by Miss Martineau.

“Coleridge, when a young man, was walking through the Lake district, when he one day saw the postman deliver a letter to a woman at a cottage door. The woman turned it over and examined it, and then returned it, saying she could not pay the postage, which was a shilling. Hearing that the letter was from her brother, Coleridge paid the postage, in spite of the manifest unwillingness of the woman. As soon as the postman was out of sight, she showed Coleridge how his money had been wasted, as far as she was concerned. The sheet was blank. There was an agreement between her brother and herself, that, as long as all went well with him, he should send a blank sheet in this way once a quarter; and she thus had tidings of him without expense of postage. Most persons would have remembered this incident as a curious story to tell; but there was one mind which wakened up at once to a sense of the significance of the fact. It struck Mr. Rowland Hill that there must be something wrong in a system which drove

a brother and sister to cheating, in order to gratify their desire to hear of one another's welfare."

The next thing was to devise something better, and, on the 10th of January 1840, Rowland Hill's Bill was carried, which fixed the postage at a uniform rate of one penny per letter of not more than half-an-ounce.

In the midst of all the stirring life of the country, Prince Albert began his course wisely and carefully. He laid before himself, as he afterwards said, no easy task. The principle upon which he acted was to sink his own individual existence in that of his wife—to aim at no power by himself or for himself—to shun all ostentation—to assume no separate responsibility before the public—to make his position entirely a part of hers—to fill up every gap which, as a woman, she would naturally leave in the exercise of her regal functions—continually and anxiously to watch every part of the public business, in order to be able to advise and assist her, at any moment, in any of the multifarious and difficult questions brought before her, political, or social, or personal—to place all his time and powers at her command, as the natural head of her family, superintendent of her household, manager of her private affairs, her sole confidential adviser in politics, and only assistant in her communications with the officers of the government, her private secretary and permanent minister.

It will be seen from this that the Prince from the first understood the extreme delicacy of his position, "and laid down for himself the rule, that no act of his should, by possibility, expose him to the imputation of interference with the machinery of the State, or of encroachment on the functions and privileges of the Sovereign. At the same time, he formed an equally clear view of his duty to qualify himself thoroughly for supporting the Sovereign by his advice; and this, it is scarcely necessary to remark, involved the most assiduous attention to every subject, whether at

home or abroad, in which the welfare of her kingdom was involved."

To meet the demands made upon him, the young Prince gave himself to the very diligent study of the English constitution. Very early after his marriage there was a great strain upon him. Of course there were levees, drawing-rooms, presentations, addresses, and other public ceremonials. "I find it very difficult," he writes, "to acclimatise myself completely. The late hours are what I find it most difficult to bear. It is not to be told what a quantity of presentations I have, and how many people I must become acquainted with; I cannot yet remember the faces, but this will come right." Those who were best acquainted with him during this time declared that he was winning his way, and behaving in his difficult position extremely well.

He had his own personal troubles to endure; naturally his thoughts turned sometimes to the friends whom he had left behind. There had been a painful scene with the old lady, his grandmother, who had cared for him so well, when he drove away from his home in Gotha. As the carriage drove off, she went to the window calling, "Albert, Albert," and had to be carried away in a fainting condition. Her grandson loved her dearly, and he must have missed her. Then soon after the wedding he had to part with his brother Ernest, and this was exceedingly painful. The Queen writes, "How I did feel for my dearest husband at this moment! Father, brother, friends, country—all has he left, and all for me. God grant that I may be the happy person, the *most* happy person, to make this dearest, blessed being happy and contented. What is in my power to make him happy I will do." It is evident that she was successful, for the Prince wrote a month or two after their marriage, "In my home life I am very happy and contented; but the difficulty in filling my place with the proper dignity is, that

I am only the husband, and not the master of the house." Attempts were made to keep the Prince from occupying his proper place, and to deny him, even in the domestic circle, that authority which, in private families, belongs to the husband, and without which there cannot be true happiness or comfort in domestic life.

But the Queen greatly disapproved of this, for she loved her husband with that sweet humility which is natural to all good, womanly women. She had vowed at the altar, not only to love and cherish, but to obey; and she meant what she said. She looked upon that marriage-vow as a "sacred obligation which she could consent neither to limit nor refine away." It would have been better to have made the Prince her Majesty's private secretary, and to have given him control over the internal arrangements of the royal household; but this was not done, and the consequence was, that the difficulty of the Prince was thereby very considerably increased. How well he met the difficulty is told by General Grey (*Early Years*):—"From the moment of his establishment in the English Palace as the husband of the Queen, his first object was to maintain, and, if possible, even raise the character of the court. With this view he knew that it was not enough that his own conduct should be, in truth, free from reproach; no shadow of a shade of suspicion should, by possibility, attach to it. He knew that, in his position, every action would be scanned—not always, possibly, in a friendly spirit; that his goings out and his comings in would be watched, and that in every society, however little disposed to be censorious, there would always be found some prone, where an opening afforded, to exaggerate, and even invent stories against him, and to put an uncharitable construction on the most innocent acts.

"He, therefore, from the first, laid down strict, not to say severe, rules for his own guidance. He imposed a degree of restraint and self-denial upon his own movements, which

could not but have been irksome, had he not been sustained by a sense of the advantage which the throne would derive from it. He denied himself the pleasure—which, to one so fond as he was of personally watching and inspecting every improvement that was in progress, would have been very great—of walking at will about the town. Wherever he went, whether in a carriage or on horseback, he was accompanied by his equerry. He paid no visits in general society. His visits were to the studio of the artist, to museums of art or science, to institutions for good and benevolent purposes. Wherever a visit from him, or his presence could tend to advance the real good of the people, there his horses might be seen waiting; never at the door of mere fashion. Scandal itself could take no liberty with his name. He loved to ride through all the districts of London where building and improvements were in progress, more especially when they were such as would conduce to the health or recreation of the working classes; and few, if any, took such interest as he did in all that was being done, at any distance, east, west, north, or south of the great city—from Victoria Park to Battersea—from the Regent's Park to the Crystal Palace, and far beyond. 'He would frequently return,' the Queen says, 'to luncheon, at a great pace,' and would always come through the Queen's dressing-room, where she generally was at that time, with that bright, loving smile with which he ever greeted her; telling where he had been—what new buildings he had seen—what studios, etc., he had visited. Riding for riding's sake he disliked, and said: '*Es ennuyirt mich so.* (It bores me so.)'"

It was not to pleasure, but to real service, that "Albert the Good" consecrated his life, from the very commencement of his residence in England.

One piece of work that he found it necessary to do was to reorganise the royal household. It is now one of the best conducted families in the kingdom; but at one time it

could scarcely be said to have been conducted at all. The inside arrangements of the Palace were in the hands of the Lord Steward, the Lord Chamberlain, and the Master of the Horse, while the outside belonged to the Woods and Forests Department. Therefore, says Baron Stockmar, "as the inside cleaning of the windows belonged to the Lord Chamberlain's Department, the degree of light to be admitted into the Palace depended proportionably on the well-timed and good understanding between the Lord Chamberlain's office, and that of the Woods and Forests." Again, "the Lord Steward finds the fuel and lays the fire, and the Lord Chamberlain lights it. In the same manner, the Lord Chamberlain provides all the lamps, and the Lord Steward must clean, trim, and light them. Before a pane of glass, or a cupboard door, could be mended, the sanction of so many officials had to be obtained that often months elapsed before the repairs could be made. As neither the Lord Chamberlain nor the Master of the Horse has a regular deputy residing in the Palace, more than two-thirds of all the male and female servants are left without a master in the house. They can come on and go off duty as they choose, they can remain absent hours and hours on their days of waiting, or they may commit any excess or irregularity; there is nobody to observe, to correct, or to reprimand them. The various details of internal arrangement, whereon depend the well-being and comfort of the whole establishment, no one is cognisant of or responsible for. There is no officer responsible for the cleanliness, order, and security of the rooms and offices throughout the Palace." There was no one to receive visitors and show them to their rooms; they had to wander about the corridors unassisted and alone, because it was no one's special duty to attend to them. Once, when the Queen was ill, there was delay because it was no one's business to fetch a doctor, until at last a servant had the presence of mind and independence of action to call a cab

and go for the medical man. On one occasion a boy was found hiding under a sofa close to the Queen's bedroom. Such a state of things evidently called for attention and improvement; but as some interests were at stake it was necessary to move very cautiously, and bring about the changes by degrees and gradually.

But notwithstanding such drawbacks as these, the Prince and the Queen were very happy together. Her Majesty has herself given us an account of their ordinary habits:—"They breakfasted at nine, and took a walk every morning soon afterwards. Then came the usual amount of business (far less heavy, however, than now); besides which they drew and etched a great deal together, which was a source of great amusement, as they had the plates "*bit*" in the house. Luncheon followed at the usual hour of two o'clock. Lord Melbourne, who was generally staying at the house, came to the Queen in the afternoon, and between five and six the Prince usually drove her out in a pony phaeton. If the Prince did not drive the Queen, he rode; in which case she took a drive with the Duchess of Kent, or the ladies. The Prince also read aloud most days to the Queen. The dinner was at eight o'clock, and always with the company. In the evening the Prince frequently played at double chess, a game of which he was very fond, and which he played extremely well.

"At first the Queen tried to get rid of the bad custom, prevailing only in this country, of the gentlemen remaining, after the ladies had left, in the dining-room. But Lord Melbourne advised against it, and the Prince himself thought it better not to make any change. The hours, however, were never late of an evening, and it was very seldom that the party had not broken up by eleven o'clock. Comparatively early, too, as the breakfast hour was, the Prince had often, particularly in later years, as work got heavier, done much business before it; written letters or

prepared the drafts of memoranda on the many important subjects in which he took an interest, or which had to be considered by the Queen.

"The Prince was also at this time much taken up with painting, and began a picture of the death of Posa, from Schiller's *Don Carlos*, making first a small sketch of it, which he did beautifully."

On Easter Monday, 20th April 1840, the first year of their married life, the Prince met with an accident that might have had serious consequences. He was riding in the Home Park when his horse became unmanageable, and ran away at full speed. The Prince tried to stop him, and turned him several times; but at last the horse brushed against a tree, and his rider was thrown. The Queen, who was looking on, wrote in her journal, "Oh, how thankful I felt that it was no worse! His anxiety was all for me, not for himself!" The Prince said afterwards that Victoria was the only person present who maintained composure and presence of mind.

Indeed, the tranquillity and self-control of her Majesty has often been severely tested, but has never failed. On the 11th June of the same year, Edward Oxford made an attempt upon the Queen's life. At this time there was appalling distress in the country, and among some classes more than a little dissatisfaction. The Ministers, though they remained in office, were exceedingly unpopular; and people asked, with displeasure, how it was that Lord Melbourne, who should have been so busy with the affairs of the country, was almost every day attending the Queen's banquets; and the poor complained that the Queen's entertainments cost money that would have saved them from poverty. But that they really loved her, and grudged her nothing, was shown directly she was in danger.

Her Majesty and the Prince went out to pay a visit to the Duchess of Kent. They were in a small phaeton, the

Prince sitting on the right and the Queen on the left hand. They had only gone a few hundred yards from the Palace when a young man, who was standing on the footpath, with his back to the Green Park fence, advanced, holding something towards them. It proved to be a pistol, and a shot was fired, which was so loud that it stunned them both. The Queen, who had turned to look at a horse, started up, for she could not understand what it was that made her ears ring. But the Prince pulled her down to her seat, and ordered the frightened postilions to drive on. The man stood in the same place, his arms crossed, and a pistol in each hand. His attitude was so affected and theatrical, that the Queen and the Prince could not help laughing. But it was short-lived mirth, for Oxford, exclaiming, "I have got another," lifted the other pistol and fired. The Queen saw the shot this time, and stooped her head. Had she not done so she might have been killed, for the shot came dangerously near; but both escaped without being touched. They at once drove on to the residence of the Duchess of Kent, in order that they might be the first to tell her of the occurrence, and so save her all unnecessary anxiety; while the man who had made the dastardly attempt was secured and taken to prison. After her interview with the Duchess of Kent, her Majesty drove to Hyde Park, that she might be refreshed by the air, and show the people that she was neither injured nor afraid. The news had spread, and an immense crowd had hurriedly gathered in the Park; and their loyalty and enthusiasm were almost unbounded. Shouts of hurrahs, grateful tears, exclamations of joy, and thousands of glad faces were visible on all hands. A large number of gentlemen on horseback surrounded the carriage, and rode as a body-guard to the Palace, where crowds of people, poor and rich, of all ages and both sexes, waited to welcome her. Prince Albert had flushed and turned pale, and been almost unable to control himself during the whole

drive. The Queen appeared perfectly calm until she entered her own chamber, but then she burst into tears.

With thankful, happy hearts the Queen and the Prince spent the evening quietly together; the hurrahs of the crowd coming to them through the closed windows, and the porters at the gates being besieged with inquiries. The excitement lasted for several days; and the Queen received addresses of congratulation from both Houses of Parliament, from the city corporation, and many other public bodies; while in all the theatres and public assemblies the people would listen to nothing until they had first joined in singing "God save the Queen."





CHAPTER X.

The First Baby, and the Birth of the Heir.

“May you rule us long,
And leave us rulers of your blood
As noble, till the latest day.”

“**M**Y chief anxiety,” wrote the Prince, after Oxford had endeavoured to shoot the Queen, “was lest the fright should have been injurious to Victoria in her present state; but she is quite well, as I am myself. I thank Almighty God for His protection.”

As soon as it was known that there was a probability of an heir being born to the English throne, it was thought advisable to bring in a Regency Bill. This was successfully carried, chiefly through Baron Stockmar’s negotiations with both of the political parties; and it provided that, in the possible event of the Queen’s death, leaving issue, the Prince, the father of the child and the natural guardian, should be the Regent. After this the Baron went home for a rest, writing to the Prince soon after:—“My cordial good wishes for your twenty-first birthday. I wish for my good Prince

a great, noble, warm, and true heart, such as shall serve as the richest and surest basis for human nature, and the firmest resolve to give them development."

At the prorogation of Parliament in August, the difficulty that had been apprehended in regard to the position which the Prince was to occupy was settled, once for all, by his taking the seat next the throne. It was done so quietly that no one interfered, the Duke of Wellington remarking afterwards, "I told you it was quite right. Let the Queen put the Prince where she likes, and settle it herself—that is the best way." The great Duke liked to bring common sense to the front in all arrangements of court etiquette. The Duke of Albemarle, when Master of the Horse, was very sensitive and particular that his own place in the royal carriage should be kept for him; but the Duke said, "The Queen can make Lord Albemarle sit at the top of the coach, under the coach, behind the coach, or wherever else her Majesty pleases."

Very glad both the Queen and her husband must have been to get away from London to Windsor. "I feel as if in Paradise, in this fine, fresh air," said the Prince; and it was, indeed, a great relief to him to be out of the way of crowds of people, and in the midst of the quiet and beauty of old Windsor. He was very fond of landscape gardening and of natural history. Already he had improved the beautiful park-like gardens of Buckingham Palace, by enlivening them with all sorts of animals and rare aquatic birds. And at Windsor his busy mind found occupation. "I am now forming a pretty little stud of all the Arab horses which Victoria has received as presents. . . . That long green space below the terrace, where the old trees stand, not under but on the top of the hill, is to be laid out in pleasure grounds, with plants, etc., and I shall occupy myself much with it." The Prince also commenced a series of readings on the laws and constitution of England, with Mr. Selwyn, the

author of the standard work on *Nisi Prius*. At the same time, the Prince and the Queen read together Hallam's *Constitutional History of England*.

On the 14th of November the Court returned to Buckingham Palace, and on the 21st the Princess Royal was born. For a moment the Prince was disappointed that the baby was a daughter and not a son, but the feeling soon gave place to joy and gratitude.

Very naturally, remembering the death of the Princess Charlotte, great anxiety was felt on behalf of the Queen; but all went well, and her recovery was speedy. The great kindness and attention which the Prince showed her filled her heart with loving gratitude. He refused to leave the Palace in case he might be wanted; and he and the Duchess of Kent generally dined alone together, until the Queen was able to join them. He sat by her, reading to her or writing for her constantly. "No one but himself ever lifted her from her bed to her sofa, and he always helped to wheel her, on her bed or sofa, into the next room. For this purpose he would come instantly when sent for from any part of the house. As years went on, and he became overwhelmed with work (for his attentions were the same in all the Queen's subsequent confinements), this was often done at much inconvenience to himself; but he ever came with a smile on his face. In short, his care for her was like that of a mother; nor could there be a kinder, wiser, or more judicious nurse."

Two days after the birth of the Princess Royal, when Mr. Selwyn came, the Prince said, "I fear I cannot read any law to-day, there are so many constantly coming to congratulate; but you will like to see the little Princess?" Prince Albert then took Mr. Selwyn into the nursery where the baby was asleep. "The next time we read," he said, "I think it must be on the rights and duties of a Princess Royal."

The Queen went to Windsor for the Christmas holidays, and a very happy family party they were. This was the Prince's favourite festival, and he kept it as he had been used in his own land. Perhaps to him may be given the credit of introducing the Christmas trees into England; he prepared them for his home, and had them hung with gifts to be surprises of pleasure to the household. No one was forgotten, and every one was pleased.

The holiday was short enough; the Queen had to go back to London to open Parliament on the 23d January 1841. "I told Albert," she writes, "that formerly I was too happy to go to London, and wretched to leave it; and how, since the blessed hour of my marriage, and still more since the summer, I dislike, and am unhappy, to leave the country, and could be content and happy never to go to town. This pleased him. The solid pleasures of a peaceful, quiet, yet merry life in the country, with my inestimable husband and friend, are far more durable than the amusements of London, though we don't despise or dislike these sometimes."

The Princess Royal was baptised on the 10th February, and received the names of Victoria Adelaide Mary Louisa.

In the same year, 1841, the Melbourne Administration came to an end. It had been long evident that the present Ministers were not equal to the terrible emergencies of the times. They confessed to a deficit of nearly two millions, and the Budget was anything but satisfactory. After some days and nights spent in debate, it was seen that the only thing to do was to ask the Queen to dissolve Parliament, and sanction an appeal to the country. The result placed the Conservatives in power, with a large majority, and the Queen gave to Sir Robert Peel the task of forming an administration.

This necessitated the parting of the Queen from her old friend, Lord Melbourne, and the ladies that had been about



THE PRINCESS ROYAL AND PRINCE OF WALES.

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THE PRINCE OF WALES AND PRINCESS ALICE

By Mrs. F. W. Howland

the throne since her accession. It was, of course, a great trouble to them all; but on this occasion her Majesty quietly submitted to the inevitable. On Thursday, the 2d of September, they dined together for the last time; and very few words were spoken, the Queen scarcely trusting herself to speak at all. After dinner, they retired to the Queen's apartments, and tears and regrets broke forth with little restraint. A chronicler of the times says, "They were natural and amiable. It was no fault of hers, nor of theirs, that their connection was made dependent upon the state of political parties. The blame rested elsewhere, though the suffering was with them. Everybody pitied the young sovereign, and saw and felt the hardships; and there were many who looked forward cheerfully to an approaching time when she would know a new satisfaction in reposing upon an administration really strong, efficient, and supported by the country; and on a household composed of persons among whom she could make friends, without the fear of their removal from any other cause than their wish or her own."

Every care was taken to consult the wishes of the Queen in the selection of the ladies of the household; and she was especially pleased that the Duchess of Buccleuch was made Mistress of the Robes, that position being really the female premiership of the household.

But if the Queen did not feel quite happy at the change, there were enough of other cares to occupy her mind, and cause this trouble to fall into the background. That year there were few court festivities, for the time was full of darkness and sorrow, and it seemed as if a great black cloud hung over England. The distress in the country, especially in the manufacturing districts, was most appalling. People were agitating and becoming violent in all directions. The Anti-Corn-Law League was hard at work; and the Chartists endeavouring to carry their points. The papers

were full of harrowing details of the prevalent distress, and the Government sent down men to make inquiries into the real state of the people. That this was only too bad was abundantly proved. One of the towns that suffered most was Leeds, which was even then a large and important manufacturing centre, but which could not provide its men with employment. A committee was formed to relieve the poor, and to inquire minutely into the condition of the labouring classes, and this committee reported that "there were in that town 747 families subsisting on one shilling and fourpence per head per week, 214 families on fourpence threefarthings per head, and 1946 families having no visible means of subsistence whatever." Other places, if not quite so badly off as Leeds, were suffering greatly; and, more or less, every town, and every family in the country, suffered from the commercial and agricultural distress that prevailed.

It was at this time that the heir to the throne of England was born. On Tuesday evening, 9th November 1841, a special *Gazette* was issued, containing the following:—"Buckingham Palace, 9th November.—This morning, at twelve minutes before eleven o'clock, the Queen was happily delivered of a Prince. . . . Her Majesty and the infant Prince are, God be praised, doing well."

There were great rejoicings throughout the country at this good news. London, especially, was pleased that the birth had taken place on the Lord Mayor's Day, and just as the time-honoured procession was starting on its march through the city. In memory of the occasion, the Lord Mayor, Mr. Pirie, was created a baronet. It soon became known that the baby was healthy and strong, and the Queen rapidly recovering. On the 4th December, the Queen created her son, by letters patent, Prince of Wales and Earl of Chester—"And this our said and most dear son, the Prince of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, as has been accustomed, we do ennoble and

invest with the said Principality and Earldom by girding him with a sword, by putting a coronet on his head and a gold ring on his finger, and, also, by delivering a gold rod into his hand, that he may preside there, and direct and defend those parts."

On the 6th of December, the Court removed to Windsor Castle, and the Queen wrote to King Leopold:—"We arrived here safe and sound, with our awfully large nursery establishment, yesterday morning. To-day is very bright, clear, and dry, and we walked out early, and felt like prisoners freed from some dungeon. I wonder very much who my little boy will be like. You will understand how fervent are my prayers, and I am sure everybody's must be, to see him resemble his father in *every* respect, both in body and mind. Oh, my dearest uncle, if you knew how happy, how blessed I feel, and how proud in possession of such a perfect being as my husband; and if you think that you have been instrumental in bringing about this union, it must gladden your heart. . . . We must all have trials and vexations, but if one's home is happy, then the rest is comparatively nothing. I assure you, dear uncle, that no one feels this more than I do. I had, this autumn, one of the severest trials I could have in parting with my government, and particularly from our kind and valued friend; and I feel even now this last very much. But my happiness at home, and the love of my husband, his kindness, his advice, his support, and his company, make up for all."

Mrs. Browning's wish had been fulfilled. In the love of her husband, and the peacefulness of her home, she had "the blissings happy peasants have."





CHAPTER XI.

Busy Years.

“ Her court was pure ; her life serene ;
God gave her peace ; her land reposed ;
A thousand claims to reverence closed
In her as Mother, Wife, and Queen.”

AT the opening of the session of 1842, the ceremony was one of unusual splendour, owing to the fact that the King of Prussia was in England, having come over to be sponsor to the Prince of Wales ; and he accompanied the Queen and the Prince in state to the House of Lords. The Baroness Bunsen, who was present, wrote of the Queen :—“ The composure with which she filled the throne while awaiting the Commons was a test of character ; no fidget and no apathy. Then her voice and enunciation could not be more perfect. In short, it could not be said that she *did well*, but she *was* the Queen ; she was, and felt herself to be, the acknowledged chief among grand national realities. Placed in a narrow space behind her Majesty’s mace-bearers, I was enabled to hide and subdue the emotion I felt in the consciousness of

the mighty pages of the world's history condensed in the words so impressively uttered in the silver tones of that feminine voice—peace and war, the fate of millions, relations of countries, exertions of power felt to the extremities of the globe, alterations of corn laws, the birth of a future sovereign mentioned in solemn thankfulness to Him in whose hands are nations and rulers! With what should one respond but with the heartfelt aspiration, God bless and guide her for her sake, and the sake of all!”

The Queen's Speech spoke of her deep grief at the continued distress in the manufacturing towns, and contained a graceful tribute to the patience and fortitude of the people under the pressure that was upon them. But to some of the lower classes it appeared a hard thing that, at the time when there was so much suffering among the poor, there should be great rejoicings at Windsor. Some low, seditious, newspapers adopted the plan of printing, in parallel columns, descriptions of the fancy dresses worn at the Queen's balls, and the reports of deaths from starvation, etc., from the pauperised districts. This roused the indignation of some among the masses, and fed their discontent. The Queen, however, was not unmindful of the unfortunate condition of the people; and many of the fancy balls and other entertainments had really been projected in the hope that a stimulus might be given to trade and home manufactures. At the christening of the Prince of Wales all the ladies wore Paisley shawls, and all the guests were expected to appear in home-wrought materials at the festivities held at the Palace. But there were so many grumblings in certain quarters, that Sir Robert Peel thought it wise to hint to the Queen the advisability of curtailing the court gaieties, and the Queen at once understood and fell in with the suggestion. The sympathy which Victoria has always felt for the bereavements and afflictions of her people had even then taken possession of her heart, although that heart was very

naturally filled with maternal joy at the birth of a son and heir. After the christening was over, the Court settled down into quietness, and was characterised by a "marked sobriety" during the next few months. Even the most suffering among the people began to see that their privations were not of the Queen's seeking or sending, but that she was in full communion with them.

And this conviction was deepened by an incident that occurred in connection with the people and the Queen's income. Sir Robert Peel went vigorously to work to introduce reforms. He made some beneficial changes in the corn laws; great alterations in the customs duties, removing the tax from such necessary articles of daily use as glass, leather, bricks, and soap. But, of course, this would mean considerable loss of revenue, which he must, by some means, make up. He therefore proposed an income-tax of sevenpence in the pound on all incomes above £150 per annum. This measure would fall least heavily on those who were least able to bear it, and it was successfully carried. No one thought of the Queen, or wished that the new law should touch her; but she wished to share all the burdens with her subjects, and, therefore, voluntarily declared that she also would pay her sevenpence in the pound as the rest did.

It was in this year that the Queen and her husband first went to Scotland. Of this, and her subsequent tours in the north, we have pleasant, chatty accounts in the Queen's own book—*Leaves from the Journal of our Life in the Highlands*. There are not many royal authors, but her Majesty may certainly take her place among them as not the least interesting or graphic. When Sir Arthur Helps suggested that the Queen should publish her notes, she replied that she had no skill whatever in authorship, that the journals were nothing but homely accounts of excursions near home, and that she was very reluctant to publish anything written by herself; but every one must be glad

that she was induced to do so, for both the account of her holidays, and her little tender tribute to the memory of her beloved husband, have been welcomed by thousands of her Majesty's subjects. No one who is going to Scotland for the first time should omit to read the former. The descriptions of the scenery of that beautiful land, though given in the simplest, plainest language, are good and true, interesting and useful. The directness of purpose, the keeping to the text visible in the book, may well be studied and imitated by young authors who are seeking, in their turn, to tell their tale to the reading world. The Queen knows what she wants to say, and she says it without circumlocution or indistinctness. It is evident that her Majesty has eyes that see, and a mind that comprehends what is passing around her. She tells, in reference to this first holiday, how much longer the light lasted in the north than in the south; what kind of weather they had; her impressions of the fine old city of Edinburgh, "totally unlike anything else I have seen, and, what is even more, Albert, who has seen so much, says it is unlike anything *he* ever saw;" how the people gave them welcome, and the Duke of Buccleuch received them as his guests; how they had oatmeal porridge and "Finnan haddies" for breakfast; what a peculiar cap, called a "mutch," the old women wore, and how pretty were the Scotch girls; how they saw Holyrood, and Knox's house, and Heriot's Hospital, and all the rest of the lions; how they visited many castles and other places of interest; how they went to Perth, and Dunkeld, and Taymouth; how, as they went up Loch Tay, they read the *Lady of the Lake*; how the Prince got up at five o'clock in the morning to go out deer-stalking; and how, when it was all over, and the fair shores of Scotland receded from their view, they felt sad that the pleasant holiday had terminated.

But there was always plenty for the Queen to do at

home. She and her husband amused their leisure by drawing and painting the portraits of their babies. The Prince wrote songs, too, and "the Queen constantly helped him in the final arrangement of the music. There was no occupation which gave her greater pleasure." Then there were many visitors that had to be received and entertained at the Palace. Mendelssohn sent to his mother, in 1842, an interesting account of a visit he paid to Buckingham Palace, the Prince having invited him to go and try his organ. The Queen came in, wearing a simple morning dress, and received the composer very kindly. The wind coming in at the open window had blown the leaves of music about the room, which was in some confusion. The Queen knelt down and began to gather them together, the Prince and Mendelssohn helping, until the Queen said she would put things straight while Albert explained the stops. Afterwards, the Prince played, and the Queen, *having finished her work*, came and sat by him, and looked pleased. Then they asked the Queen to sing; but they found that the music she wanted was packed up, as they were just leaving for Frogmore. Then the Duchess of Kent entered, and Mendelssohn, rummaging about among the music, found his own first set of songs, and asked the Queen to sing one, which she did "charmingly, and in strict time and tune, and with very good execution." When the Queen was thanked, she said, "Oh, if only I had not been so frightened; generally I have such long breath." Presently, the great composer improvised something for his royal listeners, declaring afterwards that he never felt more at his ease. "And then I took leave; and down below I saw the beautiful carriages waiting with their scarlet outriders; and in a quarter of an hour the flag was lowered, and the *Court Circular* announced, 'her Majesty left the Palace at twenty minutes past three.'"

M. Guizot, who visited the Queen, and was received with

greater state than Mendelssohn, was surprised to find politics banished altogether from conversation at the royal table. He thought it all rather dull. The Queen sat on a sofa, and some of her ladies engaged in fancy-work ; while Prince Albert challenged some one to a game at chess. M. Guizot attended one of the Queen's levées, and pronounced it "a long and monotonous ceremony." But he said, "I regarded with excited esteem the profound respect of that vast assembly—courtiers, citizens, lawyers, churchmen, officers, military and naval, passing before the Queen, the greater portion bending the knee to kiss her hand ; all perfectly solemn, sincere, and awkward. The sincerity and seriousness were both needed to prevent those antiquated habits, wigs, and bags—those costumes which no one in England wears except on such occasions—from appearing somewhat ridiculous. But I am little sensible to the outward appearance of absurdity when the substance partakes not of the character."

Some of the Queen's duties were particularly painful to her loving heart. Before Parliament relieved her of the necessity, she had to sign the death-warrant of all prisoners sentenced to suffer the capital punishment. It is said that this always caused her great distress ; and that frequently, with tears, she begged that the lives of the offenders might be spared. On one occasion she wrote PARDONED across the fatal scroll, her hand trembling with eagerness and emotion.

Once, when she had to sign a draft of a treaty that was going from England to Madagascar, she wrote along the margin—"Queen Victoria asks, as a personal favour to herself, that the Queen of Madagascar will allow no persecution of the Christians." When the treaty, having been signed in Madagascar, came back, these words had been written upon it—"In accordance with the wish of Queen Victoria, the Queen of Madagascar engages there shall be no persecution of the Christians in Madagascar."

The Queen herself has always lived the life of a Christian. She and the Prince, before the festival of Easter, spent some time in private self-examination and preparation for the communion. But the strong religious feeling, which they both shared in common, did not expend itself in emotion—it influenced and permeated their life. They had evidently taken to heart the words of the Prophet Micah—“He hath showed thee, O man, what is good ; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God.”

The Queen and her husband went nowhere but they made things better for the people. When they visited at the houses of the nobility in the country, the crowds that gathered testified to the amiable deportment of their sovereign, and no opportunity of doing real good was lost. The Queen and Prince were struck with the need of education among the children of the scattered population at Windsor Forest, and some schools were organised for them. The children were to receive both religious and secular instruction, and they were also to be taught to make their own clothes, cook their own meals, and attend to their own gardens. The Queen took a great personal interest in this school, which cost her a thousand pounds a-year.

It is good to see how methodically the Queen has attended to all duties, great and small, whether connected with her home or her Court ; indeed, it is doubtful if the hardest worked among her subjects works harder than she.

The Prince Consort had built, in connection with Buckingham Palace, a summer-house, and some of the greatest artists of the day were invited to adorn it with paintings ; one of them, Mr. Uwins, thus writes his impressions of the royal pair :—“The opportunity so lately afforded me of becoming acquainted with the habits, tastes, and, in some degree, with the intellectual acquirements of the Prince and the Queen, has greatly increased my respect.

"History, literature, science, and art, seem to have lent their stores to form the mind of the Prince. He is really an accomplished man; and withal possesses so much good sense and consideration that, taken apart from his playfulness and good-humour, he might pass for an aged and experienced person, instead of a youth of two or three-and-twenty.

"The Queen, too, is full of intelligence; her observations very acute, and her judgment apparently matured beyond her age.

"It has happened to me in life to see something of many royal personages, and I must say, with the single exception of the Duke of Kent, I have never met with any, either in England or on the continent of Europe, who have impressed me so favourably as our reigning sovereign and her young and interesting husband.

"Coming to us twice a day unannounced, and without attendants, entirely stripped of all state and ceremony, courting conversation, and desiring rather reason than obedience, they have gained our admiration and love. In many things they are an example to the age; they have breakfasted, heard morning prayers with the household in the private chapel, and are out some distance from the Palace, talking to us in the summer-house, before half-past nine o'clock, sometimes earlier. After the public duties of the day, and before their dinner, they come out again, evidently delighted to get away from the bustle of the world, to enjoy each other's society in the solitude of the garden.

"Our peaceful pursuits are in accordance with the scene; and the opportunity of watching our proceedings seems to give a zest to the enjoyment of these moments snatched from state parade and ceremony. Here, too, the royal children are brought out by their nurses, and the whole arrangement seems like real domestic pleasure."

On the 25th day of April 1843, the Queen's second

daughter was born, destined to be very dear to her father and mother, and many hearts beside. To her was given the name Alice Maud Mary. She seems to have been good from the first. Her mother writes of her, even at the christening, "Little Alice behaved extremely well," and calls her "our little baby whom I really am proud of, for she is so very forward for her age."

In August of the same year, 1843, the Queen and the Prince paid a visit to France. They made a yachting excursion, first round portions of the south coast, and then steamed across to Treport. An amusing little incident occurred as they were stepping from the Southampton pier to their yacht. It was raining fast, and the ground was wet, so the members of the corporation took off their robes and spread them on the ground, that her Majesty should not get wet-footed. The Queen must at the moment have remembered Raleigh and her illustrious predecessor, Queen Elizabeth. The visit to France was productive of great pleasure to the Queen. Whatever she may have thought of King Louis Philippe, she felt a profound esteem for his Queen and several of her sons and daughters.

As soon as that visit was concluded, her Majesty and the Prince went to Ostend, on a visit to the King and Queen of the Belgians. It was a great joy to Victoria to be the guest of King Leopold, who had been, as she said, like a father to her. They went to Bruges, Ghent, Ostend, Brussels, and Antwerp. The old cities of Flanders put on their fairest array, and the tapestries and flowers, with pictures and trees, the churches, convents, and old monuments, greatly impressed and pleased the royal visitors.

Shortly after their return, the Queen and Prince Albert visited Cambridge, and were very loyally received by the undergraduates. It was at this time that his degree of LL.D. was conferred upon the Prince. Professor Sedgwick has written an interesting letter on their visit to the Wood-

wardian Museum, which was at the time in some disorder, but which was hurriedly cleaned up, and made fit for the royal guests by the addition of a carpet and some mats. "I bowed as low as my anatomy would let me, and the Queen and Prince bowed again most graciously, and so began act first. The Queen seemed happy and well pleased, and was mightily taken with one or two of my monsters, especially with the Plesiosaurus and gigantic stag. The subject was new to her; but the Prince evidently had a good knowledge of the old world, and not only asked good questions, and listened with great courtesy to all I had to say, but in one or two instances helped me on by pointing to the rare things in my collection, especially in that part of it which contains the German fossils. I thought myself very fortunate in being able to exhibit the finest collections of German fossils to be seen in England. They fairly went the round of the museum; neither of them seemed in a hurry, and the Queen was quite happy to hear her husband talk about a novel subject with so much knowledge and spirit.

"He called her back once or twice to look at a fine impression of a dragon-fly, which I have in the Solenhope slate. Having glanced at the long succession of our fossils, from the youngest to the oldest, the party again moved into the lecture-room. The Queen was again mightily taken with the long neck of the Plesiosaurus; under it was a fine head of an Ichthyosaurus, which I had just been unpacking. I did not know anything about it, as I had myself never seen its face before, for it arrived in my absence. The Queen asked what it was. I told her as plainly as I could. She then asked whence it came, and what do you think I said? That I did not know the exact place, but I believed it came as a delegate from the monsters of the lower world, to greet her Majesty on her arrival at the University. I did not repeat this till I found that I had been overheard, and that

my impertinence had been talked of among my Cambridge friends. All was, however, taken in good part, and soon after the royal party again approached the mysterious gang-way. The Queen and Prince bowed, the Megatherium packed up his legs close under the abdominal region of his august body, the royal pageant passed under, and was soon out of my sight, and welcomed by the cheers of the multitudes before the library.

"I will only add that I went through every kind of backward movement to the admiration of all beholders, only having once trodden on the hinder part of my cassock, and never having once fallen during my retrogradations before the face of the Queen. In short, had I been King Crab I could not have walked backwards better."

The Queen and the Prince paid visits during that and the following years to several towns, and everywhere their genial courtesy and sympathy won golden opinions of the people. The fact that some time before another vile attempt had been made upon her life by a man named Francis, did not in the least lessen her quiet confidence in the love of the nation. Early the next year the Prince paid a visit to Coburg; and some charming letters passed between him and the Queen. "Farewell! my darling, and fortify yourself with the thought of my speedy return. God's blessing rest upon you and the dear children." "Oh, how lovely and friendly is this dear old country; how glad I should be to have my little wife beside me, that I might share my pleasure with her!"

The entry in the Prince's diary, written at the end of the visit, is very short and to the point. "Crossed on the 11th, I arrived at six o'clock in the evening at Windsor. *Great joy.*"

In May 1844, the Emperor of Russia came to England on a visit to the Queen, and was received and entertained with great magnificence. Some splendid fêtes were arranged

at Windsor in honour of his visit, and he expressed himself gratified by the kind reception which was given to him. His object in coming to England was, no doubt, chiefly political. The Queen wrote that she did not think him clever, as politics and military concerns were the only things in which he took an interest. He pleased the Queen by his manner to her children. "He feels kindness deeply—and his love for his wife and children, and for all children, is very great. He has a strong feeling for domestic life, saying to me, when our children were in the room, 'These are the sweet moments of our life.' One can see by the way he takes them up and plays with them that he is very fond of children."

A month or two after the termination of the visit of the Emperor, another child was born at Windsor, and received the names of Alfred Ernest Albert.

Shortly after, the French king, Louis Philippe, paid a visit to Windsor. The Queen writes:—"He is the first King of France who comes on a visit to the sovereign of this country." The Queen gave him a royal reception, and he professed himself greatly pleased with everything and every one.

At the commencement of the next year, 1845, Sir Robert Peel paid the following well-earned tribute to the Queen:—"Here I may be permitted to say, that any Executive Government that would have a due regard to the exercise of a wise and judicious economy, could not do better than follow the example which has been set them by the control exercised over her own expenditure by the sovereign. A settlement was made of the civil list on her accession to the throne. On the occasion of her marriage no addition was made to that civil list. It has pleased God to bless that marriage by the birth of four children, which has made a considerable additional demand upon the civil list. In the course of last year three sovereigns visited this country;

two of them the most powerful sovereigns in the habitable globe—the Emperor of Russia and the King of the French. Those visits, of necessity, created a considerable increase of expenditure; but, through the wise system of economy, which is the only source of true magnificence, her Majesty was enabled to meet every charge, and to give a reception to those sovereigns, which struck every one by its magnificence, without adding one tittle to the burdens of the country. And I am not required, on the part of her Majesty, to press for the extra expenditure of one shilling on account of these unforeseen causes of increased expenditure. I think that to state this is only due to the personal credit of her Majesty, who insists upon it that there shall be every magnificence required by her station, but without incurring a single debt.”





CHAPTER XII.

The Homes of the Royal Family.

“There’s no place like Home.”

“The stately homes of England,
How beautiful they stand,
Amidst their tall, ancestral trees,
O’er all the pleasant land !
The deer across their greensward bound,
Through shade and sunny gleam ;
And the sun glides past them with the sound
Of some rejoicing stream.
The free, fair homes of England !
Long, long in hut and hall,
May hearts of native proof be reared
To guard each hallowed wall !
And green for ever be the groves,
And bright the flowery sod,
Where first the child’s glad spirit loves
Its country and its God.”

E NGLAND has been called *a Nation of Homes*, and, perhaps, in no other country is the home life so dear to the people as in Old England. Happily for us, who are living in the Victorian reign, we have, in the high places of the land, a model home-

life set before us, for the Queen would say, as heartily as any British workwoman, "There's no place like home." All the cares of state did not prevent her and her husband from desiring the quiet and seclusion of a real home; indeed, the splendour and state of the Court became in time so oppressive, that it was a positive necessity to get away from them to the quiet and independence of some "loop-hole of retreat." "Nature rebels against a life in which privacy is well-nigh impossible, in which every hour is forestalled by the claims of business or ceremonial, in which there is no room for the freedom of movement, the chance greetings, the pleasant surprises, the unnoticed rambles which sweeten the days of ordinary people." It is in the nature of all work that it should grow; and the cares of life settled every year more and more heavily upon the Prince and the Queen, and made their need of a place of retirement the greater. Besides, the children must be taken into consideration, for almost every year one was added to the number; and it was necessary to think of their future training. Altogether, it was little wonder that the royal parents began to look about for other homes. In course of time two were found, one in the south and one in the north; and there is no doubt that the beautiful air, and scenery, and change which have thus been secured to the royal family, have had more than a little to do with their health and happiness.

"It was entirely through Sir Robert Peel," writes the Queen, "who knew how much we wished for a private property, and his extreme kindness, that we heard at all about Osborne."

When the King of the French set out on his return journey, the Queen and Prince accompanied him to Portsmouth, and took the opportunity of visiting the Isle of Wight, and inspecting the property. They were both delighted with it, and at once made up their minds to possess

it, if possible. They were especially charmed with the fine sea view which it gave them, and the facilities for bathing which it afforded. Hitherto, the only marine residence of the sovereign was the Pavilion at Brighton; but this had many drawbacks, and could not be made as secluded as the Queen desired, while the residence in the beautiful Isle of Wight could be made as private as they wished. Negotiations for its purchase were at once commenced; and, in March 1845, the Queen wrote to King Leopold to say that they had now a home of their own. "It sounds so pleasant to have a place of one's own, quiet and retired, and free from all Woods and Forests and other charming departments, which are really the plague of one's life. It is impossible to see a prettier place, with woods, and valleys, and points of view, which would be beautiful anywhere; but when these are combined with the sea (to which the woods grow down), and a beach which is quite private, it is really everything one could wish."

The estate of Osborne, the property of Lady Isabella Blatchford, comprised about 800 acres; but from time to time other purchases were made, and the property now comprises about 2300 acres. It was found that the house was far too small to meet the requirements of a royal establishment; and on the 23d of June 1845, the first stone of the present house was laid. A year later, the Pavilion, the part of the house in which the royal apartments are situated, was finished, and on the 15th September they slept in it for the first time. Lady Lyttleton says, in a letter to one of her friends, dated "Osborne House, 16th September 1846:—"Our first night in this house is well past. Nobody smelt paint or caught cold, and the worst is over. It was a most amusing event coming here to dinner. Everything in the house is quite new, and the drawing-room looked very handsome; the windows lighted by the brilliant lamps in the room must have been seen far out at

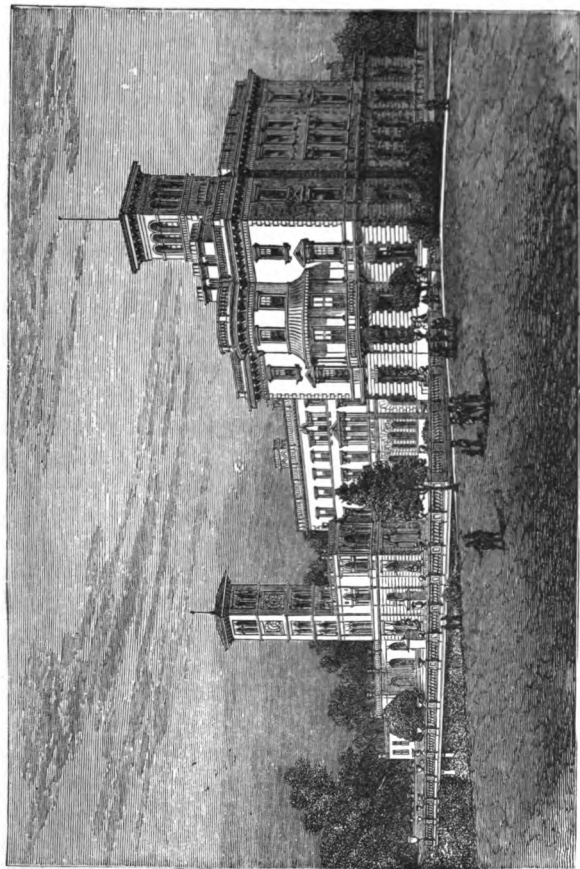
sea. I was pleased by one little thing. After dinner we were to drink the Queen and Prince's health as a *house-warming*; and after it the Prince said, very naturally and simply, but seriously: 'We have a hymn' (he called it a *psalm*) 'for such occasions, it begins—' and then he repeated two lines in German, which I could not quote right, meaning a prayer to bless our going out and coming in; it was dry and quaint, being Luther's; we all perceived that he was feeling it. And truly, entering a new house, a new palace, is a solemn thing to do, to those whose probable space of life in it is long, and in spite of rank, and health, and youth, down hill now. . . . I forgot much the best part of our breaking-in, which was, that Lucy Kerr (one of the maids-of-honour) insisted on *throwing an old shoe into the house after the Queen*, as she entered for the first night, being a Scotch superstition. It looked too strange and amusing. She wanted some melted lead, and sundry other charms, but they were not forthcoming. I told her I would call her Luckie, and not Lucy."

The custom of throwing an old shoe for luck is universal in Scotland, and is becoming so in England; but most people will think that the Prince's prayer had far more efficiency than any number of old shoes. The verse he quoted has been thus translated into English:—

"God bless our going out, nor less
Our coming in, and make them sure;
God bless our daily bread, and bless
Whate'er we do, whate'er endure;
In death unto His peace awake us,
And heirs of His salvation make us."

This would be a good hymn for every family to sing on taking possession of a new home. It will be seen that it is a paraphrase of the closing verse of the 121st Psalm.

It was several years before the whole of Osborne House was finished; and the Prince found the greatest pleasure in



OSBORNE HOUSE, ISLE OF WIGHT.

superintending the workmen engaged, both in the house and grounds. "The house," says the Queen, "was planned by the Prince, and his wishes were most admirably carried out by the late Mr. Thomas Cubitt, than whom a better and kinder man did not exist." The Prince, too, directed the laying-out of the grounds; and as he especially delighted in landscape-gardening, he was able to give his taste full scope. He turned the natural features of the place to the best advantage; and planted trees, shrubs, and flowers to his heart's content. He was also able to employ a large number of labourers, whom he treated with the greatest consideration. He had the work well done; there was no haste, for he was willing that the occupation of building it should last a long time, "and keep at a steady and useful pitch, not to over-excite the market." At harvest time great numbers of the men were dismissed, that they might go and work for others during the busy season; but they were all told that the moment any man was out of employment he could come back, and work would, without fail, be given to him. Not only in the grounds, but on the farm, the Prince found opportunity for the exercise of his skill. "Every year," writes Sir Theodore Martin, "the place grew in beauty and in charm, and so well were his measures taken for bringing the results of the highest skill and science to bear upon the land, that, unlike most amateur agriculturists, he made his farming pay. In this result he took an especial pride. Any one with means at his command can improve land, but to make costly improvements pay for themselves is the test of practical forethought and wise economy, on which, in all human affairs, the Prince set the greatest store."

Both he and his wife received great pleasure from their new possession. They walked together and alone in the beautiful woods of Osborne, and had happy times of relaxation, which must have soothed and strengthened both. The Prince had now lost his father—which was a great grief to him

—and had, as he said, none but the Queen left. But the sweet influences of country life gladdened their hearts; and the Queen does not forget to-day, in her comparative loneliness and sorrow, those first days and evenings at Osborne. The Prince especially delighted in the nightingales which thronged the woods. He was never tired of listening to them; and he used to whistle to them in their own peculiar note, which they invariably answered. The Queen says she never hears the long note now without living over the happy moments again.

Perhaps Osborne, more than either of the royal homes, was the play-place and school of the children. The Queen often refers to the "island home," where they were "wholly given up to the enjoyment of the warm summer weather," when the Queen sat under the trees, and the children were catching butterflies.

When a fresh baby came there were great rejoicings; and they were a happy family when they could say, "Now we are just as many as the days of the week." The Queen strove to be a real mother to her children. "The greatest maxim of all," she writes, "is, that the children should be brought up as simply, and in as domestic a way, as possible; that (not interfering with their lessons) they should be as much as possible with their parents, and learn to place their greatest confidence in them in all things." She said once, speaking of the little Princess Royal, "It is a hard case for me that my occupation prevents me from being with her when she says her prayers." But although she could not always be present herself, the Queen was quite decided as to the kind of religious training she wished her child to receive.

"I am quite clear that she should be taught to have great reverence for God and for religion, and that she should have the feeling of devotion and love which our Heavenly Father encourages His earthly children to have for Him, and not one of fear and trembling; and that the thoughts

of death and an after life should not be presented in an alarming and forbidding view, and that she should be made to know *as yet* no difference in creeds."

The Queen wrote of her first-born child, when she was three years old, "Our *Pussy* learns a verse of Lamartine by heart." The eldest daughter set a good example to the others. She had quite as many advantages as the rest of the children, and perhaps, indeed, being the first, rather more. She used to receive some lessons always from her mother, which were not omitted even when they were sailing about in the royal yacht.

As soon as the boys and girls were old enough, they were taught many things they could not learn in books.

"As part of the system which the Prince upheld as inseparable from sound education, of making the pupil put into practice what he has learned in theory, the Prince's two eldest sons, while still boys, had also to construct, with their own hands, a fortress, small in size, but complete in all its details. All the work, including the making of the bricks, was executed by the young Princes' own hands, who every week presented their bills for work done and received wages. It remains a creditable monument of their constructive skill, close to the Swiss cottage at Osborne, which was used by the Prince as a museum and school of practical science and industry in the education of the royal children."

A large portion of the pleasure-grounds belonging to Osborne House was devoted to the use of the royal children. Each, as soon as he or she grew old enough, had, for his own or her own use and cultivation, a flower garden and a vegetable garden, hot-house, and forcing frame. Each had a set of tools, and there was a carpenter's shop, in which the boys worked with great zeal and earnestness. Every child had a personal and experimental knowledge of gardening, and enjoyed attending to the flowers and the fruit-trees, which were his very own.

They had, too, a museum of natural history. When the children went out for their walks, they used to collect all sorts of curiosities; and, by degrees, the museum became stocked with geological and botanical specimens, with stuffed birds and animals, and with interesting articles of their own construction. The Rev. Charles Bullock, in *England's Royal Home*, says:—"Moreover, on this juvenile property was a building, the ground floor of which was fitted up as a kitchen, with pantry, closets, dairy, larder, all complete in their arrangements; and here might have been seen the young Princesses, arranged *à la cuisinière*, floured to the elbows, deep in the mysteries of pastry-making, like rosy English girls, cooking the vegetables from their own gardens, preserving, pickling, baking, sometimes to partake among themselves, or to distribute to the poor of the neighbourhood, the result of their handiwork. The Queen had determined that nothing domestic should remain unlearned by her children. Nor were the young people ever happier than during their sojourn at Osborne."

That we can well understand. It would be good for them to live the quiet, unsophisticated life of the country sometimes, in change for the excitement of London. It was never an unusual sight in the city, that of the royal children bowing pleasantly to the people whom they passed in their carriage; but it would have been a finer sight still to see the young cooks and carpenters at work in the beautiful seaside home at Osborne. They lived on plain fare. A Welsh nurse said they "were kept very plain indeed; it was quite a poor living, only a bit of roast meat, and perhaps a plain pudding;" but they doubtless went to their meals with a good appetite; and the homely food, combined with the exercise and balmy air of the Isle of Wight, were all helping to make them strong.

Perhaps the favourite residence of the Queen, however, is that of Balmoral. No one can read the little book already

referred to, *Leaves from the Journal of our Life in the Highlands*, without seeing that her Majesty is exceedingly attached to Scotland. She was so from her first visit, and the old love remains to-day. The Prince loved it too. He wrote his first impressions of Balmoral on the 11th of September 1848:—"We have withdrawn for a short time into a complete mountain solitude, where one rarely sees a human face, where the snow already covers the mountain tops, and the wild deer come creeping stealthily round the house. . . . This place belonged to poor Sir Robert Gordon, Lord Aberdeen's brother, and the little castle was built by him. It is of granite, with numerous small turrets, and whitewashed, and is situated upon a rising ground, surrounded by birchwood, and close to the river Dee. The air is glorious and clear, but icy cold."

The Queen wrote about the same time:—"Looking down from the hill which overhangs the house, the view is charming. To the left you look to the beautiful hills surrounding Lochnagar, and to the right towards Ballater, to the glen (or valley) along which the Dee winds, with beautiful wooded hills, which reminded us very much of the Thuringian Forest. It was so calm and so solitary, it did one good as one gazed around, and the pure mountain air was most refreshing. All seemed to breathe freedom and peace, and to make one forget the world and its sad turmoils. The scenery is wild, and yet not desolate; and everything looks much more prosperous and cultivated than at Laggan. Then the soil is delightfully dry. We walked beside the Dee, a beautifully rapid stream, which is close behind the house. The view of the hills toward Invercauld is exceedingly fine."

They had been advised to take a house on Deeside by Sir James Clark, who felt that the dry, bracing character of the air was precisely what was most essential for the peculiar constitutions of the Queen and Prince. The Prince

purchased the fee-simple of the estate from the Earl of Fife, in 1852, four years after their first visit; but they had no sooner taken it on a lease than they commenced to make improvements. New cottages for the tenants on the estate were built; and many improvements begun on the property, which had been greatly neglected. The Prince was delighted at the opportunity thus given of exercising his skill in agricultural and other pursuits. He set to his work wisely, keeping in view the character of the peasantry with whom he had to deal. "No good man was displaced; no honest effort at improvement went unnoticed. The duties of property, indeed, were never more thoroughly recognised than by both the Queen and the Prince. To care for those who, either as tenants or labourers, lived on the estate, and so to attach them more and more to the land and its owners, was their first thought."

Dr. Robertson, in his book on *The Prince Consort's Farms*, says:—"No views of self-interest entered into his calculations. He loved the people, he admired their character, and he respected their prejudices as the antique vestiges of other days. His royal highness believed that if they were ignorant, it was because the means of education were deficient; if they were indolent, it was because they had little field for encouragement to exert themselves; if sometimes slovenly in their habits, it was because, from poverty, they were compelled to live in comfortless mud houses. To increase the comforts of his tenants, to elevate their moral and social condition, were objects already kept in view from the time the Prince became a proprietor of Highland property; and they were pursued with unabated zeal to the end of his life.

"Anxious as his royal highness was to remedy the state of matters we have indicated, he was well aware the cure must be the work of time. School-houses were erected, and teachers appointed for the education of the young; and to

give a taste for reading, and increase still more the means of information, an excellent library, the joint gift of her Majesty the Queen and the Prince, was established at Balmoral, and thrown open, not only to tenants and servants, but to all the neighbourhood.

"It was not to agricultural improvements alone that his royal highness's attention was directed. He saw the advantage of encouraging tradesmen and labourers of good character to settle upon his estates. Houses and gardens, with a croft where it could be conveniently added, for the keep of a cow, were provided, at a very moderate rent, for the blacksmith, the carpenter, shoemaker, tailor, and general merchant. Similar encouragement was given to the steady labourer; and the extensive works thus undertaken were carried on over a series of years, so as to give constant employment."

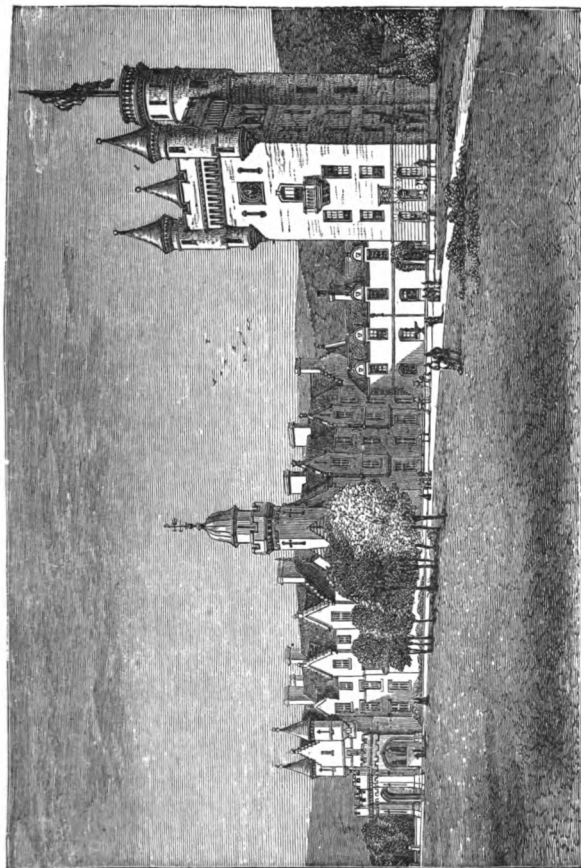
The old castle of Balmoral was found too small, and a contract was entered into with a builder for the erection of a new home. The Queen herself laid the foundation-stone, and in her journal gives the programme of the ceremony. All the family were present—the Queen, the Prince, the royal children, the Duchess of Kent, and her Majesty's guests and suite. It rained in the morning, but the sun shone out when it was wanted most, and everything passed off well. The workmen were in a semi-circle, a little distance from the stone, and the women and home-servants in an inner circle. The Rev. Mr. Anderson prayed for a blessing on the undertaking. The Queen, the Prince, the royal children, and the Duchess of Kent, signed a parchment, recording the day on which the foundation-stone was laid; and then the parchment, and one of each of the current coins of the reign, were put in a bottle, and the bottle was placed in a cavity in the stone. Then the Queen took the trowel and spread some mortar on the stone; the level and square were then applied, and a mallet was given

to the Queen, who struck the stone, and declared it well and truly laid. Then the pipes played, and the ceremony was over. A dinner was given to the workmen, at which they drank "Prosperity to the house, and happiness to the inmates of Balmoral;" and the day was finished with a dance.

Several incidents occurred during the erection of the new house to show the kindness of the Prince and the Queen. While it was in course of erection the Crimean War broke out, and the price of materials was considerably advanced. This made the contract a very unfortunate one for the builder; but the Prince took the contract off his hands, paid him a good salary as superintendent of the works, and full wages to all the workmen. Unfortunately, while the work was in progress, a fire broke out and consumed the workshops. The workmen had in their chests a considerable sum of money which they had saved, and this was lost in the fire. When the Prince heard of this, he requested the foreman to ascertain the amount of the losses of the men; and, in the end, Prince Albert paid the whole sum back to them, with kindly expressions of sympathy for the welfare of themselves and families.

The Rev. J. H. Wilson writes:—"It may be noticed in connection with this fire, as a proof of the kindly co-operation of the Prince Consort, that when the fire was raging, and the workmen had placed themselves in a line between the castle and the river, to pass buckets of water from hand to hand, the Prince took an active part in the work. The Queen also, who was present (for the fire occurred during the day), encouraged the men by her smile and kind words of counsel. In all the operations connected with the building the Prince Consort took a personal interest, going in and out among the workmen, and speaking to some of them very freely."

All who served under the Prince, indeed, found him a



BALMORAL CASTLE.

truly royal master. He said of domestic servants—"Whose heart would fail to sympathise with those who minister to us in sickness, receive us upon our first appearance in this world, and even extend their cares to our mortal remains—who lie under our roof, form our household, and are part of our family?"

The Queen's kindness to her servants is proverbial; and as she mentions some of them in her *Leaves*, it is with quite an affectionate solicitude. She and her husband used to take their seats in the same gallery in the church on Sunday, and the collecting "ladle" was handed to them as to the rest. The royal family dressed plainly in the Highlands, and the servants imitated them. It was a rule never to have more work done on a Sunday than was absolutely necessary; and the day was one of quiet and rest to all.

Among such scenes, and surrounded by good influences, the royal children received their early training. Prince Albert never forgot, in his anxiety to be a good Prince, a good husband, and a good master, the paramount duty of being a good father. Several hours a day he spent in the individual training of his children; he was himself, indeed, their chief teacher. He did one thing which it is to be wished that every father could and would do—he read every book that was to be put into the hands of his children, in order to satisfy himself that it would do them good and not harm.

"The royal family, perfectly free from all restraint, were often engaged in reading, sketching, painting, etching, photography, and gardening, each trying to outdo the other in seeking to reach some practical end; and all in the buoyancy of real filial affection, which blends the best sympathies of parental love. At Balmoral the Queen appeared, not in her regal character, but as the mother; while the Prince, as the head of the family, was looked up to and loved with the tenderest emotion."

That the houses where they lived were real homes, no one

can doubt. "Bertie" and "Vicky," "Pussy" and "Baby," pet names of the family, spoke of mother-love and childish joys. They were a happy family. Alfred, Helena, Louise, Arthur, Leopold, and, at last, Beatrice, destined to be her mother's companion through many comparatively lonely years, took their places in happy homes and loving hearts. They walked, and drove, and went to church together. On one occasion, the Queen says, when the Rev. Norman M'Leod was preaching, "Mr. M'Leod showed in the sermon how we all tried to please *self*, and to live for *that*, and in so doing found no rest. Christ had come not only to die for us, but to show how we were to live. The second prayer was very touching; his allusions to us were so simple; saying, after his mention of us, 'Bless their children.' It gave me a lump in my throat; and also when he prayed for the dying, the wounded, the widow, and the orphans."

The children were scarcely likely, with the training which they had, to grow up selfish and unkind. The Queen was full of sympathy with all who came under her observation; and this was especially shown to a young governess in the royal family, the daughter of a Scottish clergyman. She came to the Queen one day and said that she must ask permission to resign her situation, as she had received news that her mother was ill, and felt that she must at once go home, as she owed to her mother even a more sacred duty than to her sovereign. The Queen, however, did not wish her to leave, as she had been much pleased with the young lady.

"Go at once to your mother, child," she said, in tones of gentle sympathy; "stay with her as long as she needs you, and then come back to us. I will keep your place for you. Prince Albert and I will hear the children's lessons; so, in any event, let your mind be at rest in regard to your pupils."

The young governess went home and nursed her mother, who, however, grew worse, until at last she was "laid to sleep under the daisies in the old kirkyard." After some weeks of sorrow and mourning, the poor girl, now doubly an orphan, went back to her duties in the Queen's home. Her Majesty received her with that womanly tenderness which makes her character so beautiful; and was careful every day to say a few kind words to cheer the bereaved heart.

A year went by, and as the anniversary of her mother's death drew near, the poor young governess lived over the sorrow again. She felt utterly lonely, in the midst of all the grandeur that surrounded her, as she thought of the light that had gone out of her life, and longed for some one to whom she could speak of her mother. The royal family was at Windsor then; and every morning, before breakfast, the children used to go to the school-room for a brief religious exercise with their governess. On the morning of such sad memories to the orphan, she read as usual some passage from the Sacred Book, and the words of divine tenderness so touched her heart that she was quite overcome. Her strength of endurance and self-control gave way, and, laying her head on the desk before her, she burst into tears, and cried, "O mother, mother!"

The frightened children, unable to understand the grief, obeyed their instincts, and stole out of the school-room to find their mother, and tell her that their governess was crying. The Queen comprehended it all in a moment. "Oh, poor girl! it is the anniversary of her mother's death," she said, and hurried away to the school-room.

The next moment, gentle, soothing hands were upon the bowed head of the orphan, and the Queen's motherly heart was showing her how to comfort the weeping girl. "My poor child," she said, "I am sorry the children disturbed you this morning. I meant to have given orders that you should have this day entirely to yourself. Take it as a sad

and sacred holiday—I will hear the lessons of the children. And to show you that I have not forgotten this mournful anniversary, I bring you this gift.” As she spoke, the Queen clasped on the girl’s arm a beautiful mourning bracelet, with a locket for her mother’s hair, marked with the date of the mother’s death.

Grace Greenwood, who tells the tale, adds, “What wonder that the orphan kissed, with tears, this gift and the more than royal hand that bestowed it !”

It is, indeed, such acts of womanly tenderness that endear our Queen to all our hearts. She has helped to make goodness fashionable ; and in our humbler, but perhaps not less happy homes, we also try to “add to our faith virtue, and to virtue knowledge, and to knowledge temperance, and to temperance patience, and to patience godliness, and to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness charity.”





CHAPTER XIII.

To the Great Exhibition.

“Behold her in her royal place :
A gentle lady—and the hand
That sways the sceptre of this land :
How frail and weak !
Soft is the voice and fair the face :
She breathes ‘Amen’ to prayer and hymn ;
No wonder that her eyes are dim,
And pale her cheek.”

IN the 27th of January 1846, Sir Robert Peel brought before the House of Commons a series of resolutions in regard to the Corn Laws. A large number of distinguished persons attended to hear the debate. Prince Albert was one of them. So excited was the House of Commons, and especially the Opposition, that the presence of the Prince was construed into an unfair manœuvre of the Ministers to give the semblance of the sanction of her Majesty to the measure.

The Queen was rather indignant at this. She says :—
“The Prince merely went, as the Prince of Wales and the

- Queen's other sons do, for once to hear a fine debate, which is so useful to all Princes. But this he naturally felt unable to do again." Justin McCarthy says:—"The Prince Consort did not understand that, because he had married the Queen, he was therefore to be excluded from hearing a discussion in the House of Commons. The poorest man and the greatest man in the land were alike free to occupy a seat in one of the galleries of the House, and it is not to be wondered at if the Prince Consort fancied that he, too, might listen to a debate without unhinging the British Constitution. Lord George Bentinck and the Protectionists were aflame with indignation. They saw in the quiet presence of the intelligent gentleman, who came to listen to the discussion, an attempt to overawe the Commons, and compel them to bend to the will of the crown. It is not easy to read, without a feeling of shame, the absurd and unseemly comments which were made upon this harmless incident."

Sir Robert Peel said that he intended to impose a duty of ten shillings a-quarter on corn, when the price of it was under forty-eight shillings a-quarter; to reduce that duty by one shilling for every shilling of rise in price, until it reached fifty-three shillings a-quarter, when the duty should fall to four shillings. But this arrangement was only to hold good for three years, at the end of which time protective duties were to be altogether abandoned. He intended to bring the same Free Trade principle to bear upon manufactures and produce. He was about to alter certain duties of customs, and to grant certain duties on sugar and molasses. There was a debate on the Premier's resolutions, which lasted twelve nights; and at the end of that time, the Premier carried his motion relating to corn by a majority of ninety-seven votes. But the triumph of the Peel Ministry was short-lived. There was trouble in Ireland, where a savage spirit reigned, and Sir Robert

thought it necessary to introduce a Life Protection Bill. The Government was defeated on this measure, and the Minister sent in his resignation. This was a trouble to the Queen, for she had grown greatly to respect him. She wrote on 7th July:—"Yesterday was a very hard day for me. I had to part with Sir Robert Peel and Lord Aberdeen, who are irreparable losses to us and to the country. They were both so much overcome that it quite upset me. We have in them had two devoted friends; we felt so safe with them. Never, during the five years that they were with me, did they ever recommend a person or a thing that was not for my or the country's best, and never for the party's, advantage only." The Queen adds, however, "Albert's use to me, and I may say to the country, by his firmness and sagacity in these moments of trial, is beyond all belief." Sir Robert Peel must have been glad to have so won the esteem of his sovereign, who was far less genial when he came into office than when he went away from it.

Lord John Russell succeeded Sir Robert Peel as First Lord of the Treasury, Lord Palmerston became Foreign Secretary, Sir Charles Wood was Chancellor of the Exchequer, Lord Grey took charge of the Colonies, Sir George Grey was Home Secretary, and Mr. Macaulay accepted the office of Paymaster-General. The most pressing thing with which the new Ministry had to cope was the famine in Ireland. The potato crops had failed, owing to a disease that had broken out amongst the roots. As the Irish peasant, with his wife and family, lived almost entirely on the potato, the whole life system seemed to fail when that did. The people starved by hundreds. A peculiar form of fever, called famine fever, showed itself everywhere, and a terrible dysentery afflicted the people. In some of the districts of Skibbereen, Skull, and Westport, "the parochial authorities declined to put the ratepayers to the expense of

coffins for the too-frequent dead, and the coroners declared it impossible to keep on holding inquests." The Government passed several laws in the hope of bringing relief, and the English people showed their sympathy with Ireland by sending liberal contributions. "In Liverpool, for example, a great number of the merchants of the place put down a thousand pounds each. The Quakers of England sent over a delegation from their number to the especially famine-stricken districts of Ireland to administer relief. Many other sects and bodies followed the example. National relief associations were formed in England. Relief, indeed, began to be poured in from all countries. The United States employed some of their war vessels to send gifts of grain and other food to the starving places. In one Irish seaport the joy-bells of the town were kept ringing all day in honour of the arrival of these grain-laden vessels—a mournfully significant form of rejoicing surely! When the famine was over, and its results came to be estimated, it was found that Ireland had lost about two millions of her population. She had come down from eight millions to six. This was the combined effects of starvation, of the various diseases that followed in its path, gleanings where it had failed to gather, and of emigration."

In 1847 a bill was passed limiting the factory labour of young persons to ten hours per day of actual work. Earl Shaftesbury, who was then Lord Ashley, had been agitating for this for some years. He had already succeeded in bringing in a bill to prevent girls and women from being employed in mines and collieries, but he was not able to carry the ten hours measure for some years. In 1848 the country was comparatively quiet, though there was a riot in Glasgow, and another Chartist insurrection in England.

The year 1849 witnessed another attempt on the life of the Queen. On Saturday, the 19th of May, she had held a drawing-room, and was driving with three of her children

in Hyde Park, when a man discharged a pistol at her. The carriage was arrested for a moment or two, but her Majesty, with great coolness, stood up, ordered the coachman to drive on, and then entered into conversation with her children, and they were soon safe in the Palace. The man's name was Hamilton, and he was sentenced to be transported. It was in this year that the Queen visited Ireland. She had wished to go before, but it was thought better for her to wait, although she had received an invitation. However, after the prorogation of Parliament, in the autumn of 1849, she and Prince Albert proceeded to Cowes, and, accompanied by their two eldest children, steered for Cork. The famine was over, and the people were glad. On nearing the country the Queen and Prince were welcomed with addresses. They landed at a little place called the Cove of Cork, but afterwards called Queenstown, in honour of its being the first spot upon which the Queen set foot in Ireland. The royal party then re-embarked, and steamed up the beautiful river Lee, towards Cork. They stopped at Blackrock Castle, in order to receive from the fishermen of Blackrock a fine salmon and an address. At Cork they received a most enthusiastic welcome. The Queen thus writes her first impressions :—"I cannot describe our route ; but it will suffice to say that it took two hours ; that we drove through the principal streets—twice through some of them ; that they were densely crowded, and decorated with flowers and triumphal arches ; that the heat and dust were great ; that we passed by the new college which is building—one of the four which are ordered by Act of Parliament ; that our reception was most enthusiastic, and that everything went off to perfection, and was very well arranged. Cork is not at all like an English town, and looks rather foreign. The crowd is a noisy, excitable, but very good-humoured one, running and pushing about, and laughing, and talking, and shrieking. The beauty of the women is very

remarkable, and struck us much ; such beautiful, dark eyes and hair, and such fine teeth ; almost every third woman was pretty, and some remarkably so. They wear no bonnets, and generally long blue cloaks ; the men are very poorly off, and raggedly dressed ; and many wear blue coats and short breeches, with blue stockings."

From Cork they went to Dublin, and here a welcome was given them that can only be called tremendous. "As the clock struck ten, we disembarked, stepping on shore from the yacht, Albert leading me and the children, and all the others following us. An immense multitude had assembled, who cheered most enthusiastically, the ships saluting, and the bands playing ; and it was really very striking. The space we had to walk along to the railroad was covered in, and lined with ladies and gentlemen strewing flowers." "It was a wonderful and striking scene, such masses of human beings, so enthusiastic, so excited, yet such perfect order maintained ; then the numbers of troops, the different bands stationed at certain distances, the waving of hats and handkerchiefs, the bursts of welcome which rent the air—all made it a never-to-be-forgotten scene, when one reflected how lately the country had been in open revolt and under martial law."

They visited the Bank, the old houses of Lords and Commons, Trinity College, and all other places of interest. The Queen thought Dublin a very fine city ; and records, that as she passed under the last triumphal arch, "a poor little dove was let down into my lap, with an olive-branch round its neck, alive and very tame."

Her Majesty was exceedingly pleased with the Model Schools. "We saw the infants', the girls', and the boys' schools. In the latter, one class of boys was examined in mental arithmetic, and in many very difficult things, and they all answered wonderfully. Children of all creeds are admitted, and their different doctrines are taught separately

if the parents wish it ; but the *only* teaching enforced is that of the gospel truths, and love, and charity. This is truly Christian, and ought to be the case everywhere. About a thousand children are educated here annually, of which three hundred are trained as schoolmasters and schoolmistresses."

The visit of the Queen to these schools was not only pleasurable to herself, but gratifying to all connected with it. In the report of the Irish Educational Commissioners for 1849 occur these words :—" We cannot conclude our report for 1849 without alluding, with pride and gratitude, to the visit with which our Model Schools were honoured on the 7th of August, by her Majesty, Queen Victoria, and by her royal consort, Prince Albert, accompanied by your Excellency. We are convinced that this visit, so promptly and cordially made, has left an indelible impression upon the hearts of the poor of Ireland, for whose benefit our system has been established ; and that they will ever regard the compliment as the most appropriate and decisive that could have been paid by her Majesty to themselves. All reflecting men, whether friends or opponents of our institution, have not failed to see the importance of the step. By the country at large it has been hailed as an eminent proof of her Majesty's wisdom and goodness, and as peculiarly worthy of the daughter of that illustrious Prince, who was the ardent advocate of the education of the poor, when denounced by many as a dangerous novelty ; and of their united education on just and comprehensive principles, when most men regarded it as impracticable."

From Dublin, the Queen went to Belfast ; and there she was very much interested in going through the flax and linen exhibition at the Linen Hall. She admired the Irish constabulary, and was pleased with the Irish motto—"Cead mille failte," "A hundred thousand welcomes"—which met her on every hand.

The *Times* correspondent thus describes the scene in Dublin:—"It was a sight never to be forgotten—a sound to be recollected for ever. Ladies threw aside the old formula of waving a white pocket-handkerchief, and cheered for their lives; while the men, pressing in so closely as to throng the very edges of the pavilion, waved whatever came first to hand—hat, stick, wand, or coat (for the day was very hot), and rent the air with shouts of joy, which never decreased in energy till their sovereign was out of sight. . . . The royal children were objects of universal attention and admiration. 'Oh, Queen, dear!' screamed a stout old lady, 'make one of them Prince Patrick, and all Ireland will die for you.'"

The same year the little Prince of Wales and the Princess Royal performed their first public ceremony—they opened the new Coal Exchange. The Queen was not able to witness it, as she was suffering from an attack of chicken-pox; but Lady Lyttleton, in a letter to Mrs. Gladstone, gives an account of the proceedings. "Every inch of ground, every bridge, roof, window, and as many vessels of all sorts as could lie on the river, leaving our simple passage clear, were covered, close packed, with people. And the thought that all were feeling alike, both for the Queen and the poor little fair-headed child they cheered, was overpowering. He and his sister behaved very well, civilly, and nicely; but they could not, of course, feel all that I felt. The Prince was perfect in taste and manner, putting the Prince of Wales forward without affectation, and very dignified and kind himself. The most striking time to me was after landing, when the procession moved along a long covered gallery, which held many thousand people each side of the Prince and children. The cheers close to us, and the countenances, every one looking so *affectionately*, quite like parents, on the two little creatures, stretching over one another to see and smile at them, I shall never forget."

Very soon after this the good Queen Adelaide died. According to her own wish a number of sailors carried her to her last resting-place; and the people mourned for her as for one whose life had been spent in doing good, and altogether blameless.

In June 1850, there was a long debate in the House of Commons on Lord Palmerston's policy in regard to Greece; and during the debate many notable speeches were made; among the rest one by Sir Robert Peel, which proved to be his last. It was a time altogether of trial to the royal family. The Duke of Cambridge was seriously ill. The Queen called to see the Duchess, when, as she was leaving Cambridge House, a person started forward and struck her Majesty a blow across the face with a cane, causing the blood to flow. One or two persons seized him, and the Queen at once drove home. The Prince wrote to Stockmar immediately after, "Victoria, thank God, is well; although her forehead is much bruised, and her nerves are still somewhat shaken by the shameful occurrence of yesterday. The perpetrator is a dandy whom you must often have seen in the Park, where he had made himself conspicuous. He maintains the closest silence as to his motives, but is manifestly deranged. All this does not help to make one cheerful."

The people were very indignant; but the Queen soon had other things to think of. The very day after Sir Robert Peel had spoken so well on the Grecian question, he called to make his inquiries respecting the health of the Queen after the recent outrage, and on his way home his horse became restive, and threw his illustrious rider to the ground. He lived two or three days, but died on the 2d of July. The people mourned as for a personal friend. Mr. Hume moved the adjournment of the House of Commons out of respect to the deceased statesman. Mr. Gladstone seconded the motion, quoting the lines—

"Now is the stately column broke,
The beacon light is quenched in smoke ;
The trumpet's silvery light is still,
The warder silent on the hill."

Lord Stanley, Lord Brougham, the Duke of Wellington, and Lord John Russell, all bore witness to the excellence of his character and the greatness of his services. He was buried, according to his own wish, with his relatives in Drayton Bassett church ; but a monument was erected in Westminster Abbey to perpetuate his memory.

There is a story told to the effect that Sir Robert Peel once, in Buckingham Palace, took up the Prince of Wales in his arms—the Prince being, of course, a little child at the time—"and expounded to the Queen the historic Tory doctrine of loyalty to the crown, and said that the fate and fortunes of the young Prince were dearer to none than to the Conservative party."

The Queen was always courteous to her Ministers, and she had grown to like Sir Robert Peel better the more that she knew of him.

That she always remembered what was due to herself from her Ministers was proved by an incident that occurred in connection with Lord Palmerston, soon after the death of Sir Robert. The Queen wished that there should be the clearest understanding between herself and the Foreign Office, and so, after much thought, she wrote the following:—"The Queen expects to be informed of what passes between him (Lord Palmerston) and the Foreign Ministers before important decisions are taken, based upon that intercourse ; to receive the foreign despatches in good time ; and to have the drafts for her approval sent to her in sufficient time to make herself acquainted with the contents before they are sent off. The Queen thinks it best that Lord John Russell should show this letter to Lord Palmerston."

The Queen had evidently thought there had been a little neglect on the part of Lord Palmerston, who took her Majesty's suggestion in good part.

The grand event of the year 1851 was the opening of the great Exhibition. It was to the Prince Consort himself that the country was indebted for that truly splendid achievement. Not that the idea of an exhibition originated with him, for the Frankfort fairs of the sixteenth century had been the first efforts of the kind, and there had been several exhibitions in Paris ; but the Prince thought that the time had come for England to attempt, on a scale of considerable magnitude, an exhibition that would afford "the means of showing what every country was able to produce in the shape of raw materials, in machinery and mechanical inventions, in manufactures, and also in sculpture, in plastic art, and generally in art as applied to manufactures. Such an exhibition, if successfully carried out, could not fail to produce results of permanent benefit in many ways. To put the argument for it on the lowest grounds, it would enable the active spirits of all nations to see where they stood, what other nations had done and were doing, what new markets might be opened, what new materials turned to account, how they might improve their manufacturing processes, and what standards of excellence they must aim at in the general competition which steam and railroads, it was now seen, would before long establish throughout the world."

These were the Prince's ideas respecting the Exhibition ; and it needed all his influence, his patience, and far-seeing acuteness to carry them out. First, he called a meeting of the Society of Arts at Buckingham Palace, which society took up the idea, and spread it abroad ; then a meeting of merchants and bankers was held ; and afterwards, at a meeting at the Mansion House, ten thousand pounds was collected as the beginning of a guarantee fund. On the 21st

March the Lord Mayor of London gave a banquet to the chief magistrates of the cities, towns, and boroughs of the United Kingdom, inviting their co-operation and support; and Prince Albert made a speech, in which, with great clearness and grace, he set forth the purposes of the Exhibition, "which were," he said, "to give the world a true test, a living picture, of the point of industrial development at which the whole of mankind has arrived, and a new starting-point from which all nations will be able to direct their further exertions."

The idea was violently opposed by many people, especially by Colonel Sibthorpe, who foretold all sorts of terrible visitations from the importation of a crowd of foreigners. Lord Campbell and Lord Brougham were against the occupation of any part of Hyde Park by the Exhibition building, and the *Times* made a furious attack on the same question. The Prince himself wrote:—"The opponents of the Exhibition work with might and main to throw all the old women here into a panic, and to drive myself crazy. The strangers, they give out, are certain to commence a thorough revolution here, to murder Victoria and myself, and to proclaim the Red Republic in England; the plague is certain to ensue from the confluence of such vast multitudes, and to swallow up those whom the increased price of everything has not swept away. For all this I am to be responsible, and against all this I have to make efficient provision."

One difficulty was that of selecting a plan for the building, which, happily, was overcome by a sudden thought of Mr. (afterwards Sir Joseph) Paxton, who had at that time the management of the Duke of Devonshire's grounds at Chatsworth, and who conceived the idea of building an immense palace of glass and iron. The idea met with great approbation, and the novel building rose in Hyde Park, to the wonder and admiration of all. Into it in due

time was brought the wealth of the nations of the world, and to see it came peoples of every tribe and tongue.

It was opened on May Day, and of all the interesting accounts of the ceremony, none is more interesting than that written by the Queen herself. It is so womanly, and full of gratitude, that our readers will thank us for reproducing it here as it occurs in the Queen's diary.

"May 1st.—The great event has taken place—a complete and beautiful triumph—a glorious and touching sight—one which I shall ever be proud of, for my beloved Albert and my country. . . . Yes! it is a day which makes my heart swell with pride, and glory, and thankfulness.

"We began it with tenderest greetings for the birthday of our dear little Arthur. At breakfast there was nothing but congratulations. . . . Mamma and Victor were there, and all the children and our guests. Our humble gifts of toys were added to by a beautiful little bronze *replica* of the Amazon (Kiss's) from the Prince of Prussia, a beautiful paper-knife from the Princess of Prussia, and a nice little clock from mamma.

"The Park presented a wonderful spectacle, crowds streaming through it, carriages and troops passing, quite like the coronation day, and for me the same anxiety—no much greater anxiety on account of my beloved Albert. The day was bright, and all bustle and excitement. . . . At half-past eleven the whole procession, in state carriages, was in motion. . . . The Green Park and Hyde Park were one densely crowded mass of human beings, in the highest good-humour, and most enthusiastic. I never saw Hyde Park look as it did—as far as the eye could reach. A little rain fell just as we started; but before we came near the Crystal Palace, the sun shone and gleamed upon the gigantic edifice, upon which the flags of all the nations were floating. We drove up Rotten Row, and got out at the entrance on that side.

“The glimpse of the transept through the iron gates, the waving palms, flowers, statues, myriads of people filling the galleries and seats around, with the flourish of trumpets as we entered, gave us a sensation which I can never forget, and I felt much moved. We went for a moment to a little side-room, where we left our shawls, and where we found mamma and Mary (now Duchess of Teck), and outside which were standing the other Princes. In a few minutes we proceeded, Albert leading me, having Vickey at his hand and Bertie holding mine. The sight, as we came to the middle, where the steps and chair (which I did *not* sit on) were placed, with the beautiful crystal fountain just in front of it, was magical—so vast, so glorious, so touching! One felt—as so many did whom I have since spoken to—filled with devotion—more so than by any service I have ever heard. The tremendous cheers, the joy expressed in every face, the immensity of the building, the mixture of palms, flowers, trees, statues, fountains—the organ (with 200 instruments and 600 voices, which sounded like nothing), and my beloved husband the author of this “Peace-Festival,” which united the industry of all nations of the earth—all this was moving indeed, and it was and is a day to live for ever. God bless my dearest Albert! God bless my dearest country, which has shown itself so great to-day! One felt so grateful to the great God, who seemed to pervade all and to bless all! The only event it in the slightest degree reminded me of was the coronation, but this day’s festival was a thousand times superior. In fact, it is unique, and can bear no comparison, from its peculiarity, beauty, and combination of such different and striking objects. I mean the slight resemblance only as to its solemnity; the enthusiasm and cheering, too, were much more touching, for in a church naturally all is silent.

“Albert left my side after ‘God Save the Queen’ had been sung, and at the head of the commissioners—a curious

assemblage of political and distinguished men—read me the report, which was a long one, and to which I read a short answer. After which the Archbishop of Canterbury offered up a short and appropriate prayer, followed by the ‘Hallelujah Chorus,’ during which the Chinese Mandarin came forward and made his obeisance. This concluded, the procession began. It was beautifully arranged, and of great length—the prescribed order being exactly adhered to. The nave was full, which had not been intended ; but still there was no difficulty, and the whole long walk, from one end to the other, was made in the midst of continued and deafening cheers, and waving of handkerchiefs. Every one’s face was bright and smiling, many with tears in their eyes. Many Frenchmen called out ‘Vive la Reine!’ One could of course see nothing but what was near in the nave, and nothing in the courts. The organs were but little heard, but the military band, at one end, had a very fine effect as we passed along. They played the march from *Athalie*. The beautiful Amazon, in bronze, by Kiss, looked very magnificent. The old Duke and Lord Anglesey walked arm-in-arm, which was a touching sight. I saw many acquaintances amongst those present.

“We returned to our place, and Albert told Lord Breadalbane to declare the Exhibition opened, which he did in a loud voice—‘Her Majesty commands me to declare this Exhibition open’—which was followed by a flourish of trumpets and immense cheering. All the commissioners, the executive committee, etc., who worked so hard, and to whom such immense praise is due, seemed truly happy, and no one more so than Paxton, who may be justly proud ; he rose from being a common gardener’s boy.

“The return was equally satisfactory. The crowd most enthusiastic, the order perfect. We reached the Palace at half-past one, and went out on the balcony, and were loudly cheered. The Prince and Princess of Prussia quite

delighted and impressed. That *we* felt happy—thankful—I need not say ; proud of all that had passed ; of my darling husband's success, and of the behaviour of my good people. I was more impressed than I can say by the scene. It was one that can never be effaced from my memory, and never will be from that of any one who witnessed it. Albert's name is immortalised, and the wicked and absurd reports of dangers of every kind, which a set of people—viz., the *soi-disant* fashionables and the most violent Protectionists—spread, are silenced. It is, therefore, doubly satisfactory that all should have gone off so well, and without the slightest accident or mishap. . . . Albert's emphatic words last year, when he said the feeling would be, '*that of deep thankfulness to the Almighty for the blessings which He had bestowed upon us already here below,*' are this day realised. . . . I must not omit to mention an interesting episode of this day—viz., the visit of the good old Duke on this his eighty-second birthday, to his little godson, our dear little boy. He came to us both at five, and gave him a golden cup and some toys ; and Arthur gave him a nosegay.

"We dined *en famille*, and then went to the Covent Garden opera, where we saw the two finest acts of the *Huguenots* given as beautifully as last year. I was rather tired ; but we were both so happy, so full of thankfulness ! *God is indeed our kind and merciful Father.*"

The Exhibition proved in all respects a grand success. It remained open 138 days, and was visited by 6,007,944 persons, an average of 43,536 each day. It was found, after all expenses were paid, that a surplus remained of £150,000, which money has gone to the encouragement of art and industry. It did not bring, as some fondly hoped, a time of permanent peace to the world ; but it greatly promoted all manufactures and arts. It has been followed by other exhibitions, but none have ever equalled in interest this—the great work of "Albert the Good."



CHAPTER XIV.

From Peace to War.

"And mixt, as life is mixt with pain,
The works of peace with works of war."

THIS was a very wet day on which the Great Exhibition was closed, and to the minds of not a few people there was some appropriateness in the fact. There were fifty thousand persons present on that occasion; and at five o'clock Mr. Belchar, one of the managers, advanced to the front of the west transept gallery, and waved a red flag, whilst on the other side a tablet, bearing the following lines from Shakspeare's *Tempest*, was displayed:—

"Our revels now are ended : these our actors,
As I foretold you, were all spirits, and
Are melted into air—into thin air :
And, like the baseless fabric of this vision,
The cloud-capp'd towers, the gorgeous palaces,
The solemn temples, the great globe itself,
Yea, all which it inhabit, shall dissolve ;
And, like this insubstantial pageant faded,
Leave not a rack behind."

The National Anthem was then played by the band and all the organs in the building, and as that finished, all the bells in the palace played a death-peal, and the show was over. The Prince records the fact that there had not been a single accident. The lasting memorials of the Exhibition are the Crystal Palace, which has been built of the glass and iron used, and the South Kensington Museum, toward the purchase of which the surplus fund was appointed.

It was hoped by some that the Great Exhibition would pave the way for a grand, continuous, universal peace. But the author of *Our Own Times* says:—"The Hyde Park Exhibition, and all the exhibitions that followed it, have not as yet made the slightest perceptible difference in the warlike tendencies of nations. The Hyde Park Exhibition was often described as the festival to open the long reign of Peace. It might, as a mere matter of chronology, be called, without any impropriety, the festival to celebrate the close of the short reign of Peace. From that year, 1851, it may be said fairly enough that the world has hardly known a week of peace. The *coup d'état* in France closed the year. The Crimean war began almost immediately after, and was followed by the Indian Mutiny, and that by the war between France and Austria, the long civil war in the United States, the Neapolitan enterprises of Garibaldi, and the Mexican intervention, until we come to the war between France and Germany, and the war between Russia and Turkey." These things showed how far was the Exhibition from answering all the ends which its promoters fondly hoped it would. But perhaps it did more than a little to bring into the hearts of the people the aspirations after peace, which may, in some happy future, be even yet realised.

Before the Exhibition, the sky had grown dark over the continent of Europe. The French Revolution had broken out, and Louis Philippe had been compelled to flee to the

Queen, as a fugitive, for protection. In Italy, Hungary, and Austria, there had been troubles; while revolutionary outbreaks in Germany had filled many with alarm.

Louis Napoleon was made the President of the French Republic, in place of King Philippe, in December 1848; and on the 2d December 1851 occurred the famous *coup d'état*. It was thought that Lord Palmerston, who was then Foreign Secretary, had been indiscreet in declaring that he approved of the *coup d'état*, and he was dismissed. The year 1852 was one of great excitement in England. An invasion panic took possession of the people, who feared that Napoleon, who had certainly not hesitated to use any means to gain his own ends, intended to be revenged for the defeat at Waterloo by making war upon England. This was the occasion of the reorganisation of the Militia; and the commencement of the movement which resulted, a few years later, in the establishment of the Volunteer force. The Russell Ministry was sent out of office that year, and the Derby Administration went in; and on the 14th of September, of that same 1852, the Duke of Wellington died. He had been, the Queen said, "the greatest commander England had ever known." From the time when he was twenty years old, until the time when the battle of Waterloo was fought and won, he was almost always engaged in the wars, and almost always led his men to victory. But for the last thirty years of his life he lived in peace, giving his attention chiefly to politics, supporting some measures which did not commend themselves to his own predilections, if he saw that they would help the government, and were demanded by the people. His last speech was made in support of the Militia Bill; and one afternoon, a few months afterwards, he fell quietly asleep in Walmar Castle, and he did not wake again. He was a very old man, having nearly reached his eighty-fourth birthday. He was mourned by all England. He had come to be looked upon as the wisest

counsellor of his day; and he was intensely loyal to the Queen and the country. He used to be called "The Iron Duke," and people had gloried in his strength; yet when he was strong no longer, and rode bent over his horse, they spoke of him affectionately as "The Duke," and were proud of him still. Southey, in his *Peninsular War*, spoke of him in words that may well be quoted:—"There was something more precious than these (his military successes), more to be desired than the high and enduring fame which he had secured by his military achievements—the satisfaction of thinking to what those achievements had been directed; that they were for the deliverance of two most injured and grievously oppressed nations; for the safety, honour, and welfare of his own country; and for the general interests of Europe, and of the civilised world. His campaigns were sanctified by the cause; they were sullied by no cruelties, no crimes; the chariot-wheels of his triumphs have been followed by no curses; his laurels are entwined with the amaranths of righteousness, and upon his death-bed he might remember his victories among his good works."

The court was at Balmoral when the news of the Duke's death reached the Queen. She was filled with sorrow. "He was," she wrote, "the pride and good genius, as it were, of this country; the most loyal and devoted subject, and the staunchest supporter the crown ever had. He was to us a true friend and most valuable adviser."

They gave the Duke a public funeral on a very magnificent scale, all parties doing honour to his memory. He was laid "at the public expense, and with all the solemnity due to the greatness of the occasion, in the Cathedral Church of St. Paul's, there to rest by the side of Nelson—the greatest military by the side of the greatest naval chief who ever reflected lustre upon the annals of England."

It was about this time that the Queen came into posses-



DUKE OF WELLINGTON.

sion of a large fortune that had been bequeathed to her by Mr. John Camden Nield. This man was a barrister, a man of great learning, but of penurious habits, who had succeeded to the fortune of his father, and allowed it to accumulate during his life-time. He had no relatives that he knew of, and he thought that he could not more worthily bestow his property than by leaving it all to the Queen. Her Majesty was, of course, very pleased to have the money, and the good opinion of the man who had deemed her worthy. "It is astonishing," she wrote, "but satisfactory, to see the people have so much confidence that it will not be thrown away; and so it certainly will not be."

The Aberdeen, or, as it was called, the Coalition Administration, was formed in the closing days of 1852. All the members of Government were to be supporters of Free Trade; but, for the time, the Conservatives and the Liberals were to join hands; and in the Ministry were these men—Lord Aberdeen, the Duke of Newcastle, Lord John Russell, Lord Palmerston, Mr. Gladstone, Lord Granville, Sir James Graham, Sir Charles Wood, and Mr. Sidney Herbert. It was during the debate on the night when the fate of the Derby Ministry was sealed, that the two men—Mr. Disraeli, who was then Chancellor of the Exchequer, and Mr. Gladstone—"began that long Parliamentary duel which only knew a truce when, at the close of the session of 1876, Mr. Disraeli crossed the threshold of the House of Commons for the last time, thenceforward to take his place among the peers as Lord Beaconsfield." After the vote, which left the government in a minority of nineteen, at four o'clock on a cold wet morning, he remarked, "It will be an unpleasant day for going to Osborne."

Mr. Gladstone took his place as Chancellor of the Exchequer, and great things were hoped of the new Administration. At this time the Kaffir war was going on; and there was great excitement in England on account

of the discovery of gold-fields in Australia. The camp at Chatham aroused considerable interest, the Queen going down to review the troops. She rode on horseback, dressed in a military riding habit. "Upwards of a hundred thousand people shared in her Majesty's enjoyment of what was, in truth, a singularly beautiful spectacle—a well-contested, though bloodless battle, over ground broken by hollows, streams, marshes, and woods, while showing to the greatest advantage the shifting currents of a heavy fight."

Immediately after this the whole royal family, not excepting the Queen and the Prince, were attacked by measles. As soon as she was sufficiently recovered, her Majesty held a naval review at Spithead, and then paid her second visit to Ireland. She had intended going in time for the opening of the Art and Industrial Exhibition held in Dublin, but was prevented by her illness. She visited the exhibition, however, with the Prince Consort, the Prince of Wales, and Prince Alfred, and was greatly delighted with all that she saw.

At this time the war-cloud was gathering over Europe, which, before it had passed away, brought trouble and death to England, as well as other countries. Not that England had originally any quarrel with Russia; the beginning of the affray was with Russia and Turkey, and it was connected with the sites of Jerusalem, where the birth, crucifixion, and burial of our blessed Saviour are supposed to have taken place, which sites were called "The Holy Places." But the quarrel did not end here; and bitter feelings of strife went on, gathering in intensity, until, at last, the quarrel assumed great proportions; and England was engaged in war. At the meeting of Parliament in January 1854, the Queen's Speech expressed regret that her endeavours to effect a settlement of the differences between Russia and Turkey had not been successful, and declared that the present aspect of affairs rendered an increase of the

naval and military forces inevitable. On the 31st of March both Houses voted addresses to the Queen, promising her their support in the war; and on the 3d of April the Peers and Commons went in procession to Buckingham Palace, to present the addresses to her Majesty, and were loudly cheered by the people. The Queen had already been to Spithead to review the Baltic Fleet, a splendid armament comprising forty-four vessels, manned by 21,696 seamen, and impelled by the power of 14,562 horses. On the 12th August, when the Queen prorogued Parliament, she said:—"In cordial co-operation with the Emperor of the French, my efforts will be directed to the effectual repression of that ambitious and aggressive spirit, on the part of Russia, which has compelled us to take up arms in defence of an ally, and to secure the future tranquillity of Europe. You will join with me in admiration of the courage and perseverance manifested by the troops of the Sultan in Silistria, and in the various military operations on the Danube." Expeditions, and fights on sea and land, then became the order of the day. The invasion of the Crimea was determined upon on the 29th of June, when a despatch was sent from London to Lord Raglan, with instructions to proceed without delay to the Crimea, and lay siege to Sebastopol, "as there was no chance of an honourable or permanent peace unless the fortress was reduced, and the Russian fleet destroyed."

The battle of the Alma was fought on the 20th of September 1854. The bombardment of Sebastopol was carried on from the 17th to the 25th of October, on which day the battle of Balaklava was fought. It was during this battle that the famous Light Cavalry's charge was made. Some order of Lord Raglan's was misunderstood; and the result was that 607 men charged what has been rightly described as "the Russian army in position." One of the most spirited of all the Laureate's poems commemorates the

magnificent but futile attempt ; and the heroism of the men will form a splendid page in the history of our times for ever.

“ Half a league, half a league,
Half a league onward,
All in the valley of Death
Rode the Six Hundred.
‘ Forward, the Light Brigade !
Charge for the guns ! ’ he said :
Into the valley of Death
Rode the Six Hundred.
‘ Forward the Light Brigade ! ’
Was there a man dismay’d ?
Not tho’ the soldier knew
Some one had blunder’d :
Their’s not to make reply,
Their’s not to reason why,
Their’s but to do and die ;
Into the valley of Death
Rode the Six Hundred.

“ Cannon to right of them,
Cannon to left of them,
Cannon in front of them
Volley’d and thunder’d ;
Storm’d at with shot and shell,
Boldly they rode, and well,
Into the jaws of Death,
Into the mouth of Hell
Rode the Six Hundred.
Flash’d all their sabres bare,
Flash’d as they turn’d in air
Sab’ring the gunners there,
Charging an army, while
All the world wonder’d :
Plunged in the battery-smoke
Right thro’ the line they broke ;
Cossack and Russian
Reel’d from the sabre-stroke ;
Shatter’d and sunder’d.
Then they rode back, but not—
Not the Six Hundred.

“ Cannon to right of them,
Cannon to left of them,
Cannon behind them
Volley'd and thunder'd ;
Storm'd at with shot and shell,
While horse and hero fell,
They that had fought so well
Came through the jaws of Death,
Back through the mouth of Hell,
All that was left of them—
Left of Six Hundred.

“ When can their glory fade ?
O the wild charge they made !
All the world wonder'd.
Honour the charge they made !
Honour the Light Brigade !
Noble Six Hundred ! ”

A few days later, on the 5th of November, the battle of Inkermann, “the soldier's battle,” was fought. “Protected by a tremendous fire of shot, shell, and grape, the Russian columns advanced in great force, requiring every effort of gallantry on the part of our troops to resist them.” The battle is described as “the bloodiest ever witnessed since war cursed the earth ; the bayonet being often the only weapon employed in a conflict of the most obstinate and deadliest character.” The English had a list of six hundred and thirty-two killed, and 2573 wounded ; while the Russians are said to have buried 2000 men on the field.

The battle of Inkermann was won on a day that was cold, dark, and wet ; and this weather continued until the end of the year. It was, indeed, in all respects, “a black winter ;” and the sufferings of our men were indescribable. The accounts sent to England by the representatives of the press, notably by Mr. William Howard Russell, the correspondent of the *Times*, filled English hearts with pain, and with shame too ; for not only had the soldiers to endure the

ordinary troubles of war, added to the prevailing bad weather, but there was an abominable amount of bad management which increased their sufferings tenfold. On the 14th of November there was a furious storm; a terrible whirlwind swept over the plateau where the English were encamped, dashing down the tents, and scattering their contents far and wide; while a gale at sea destroyed a number of transports and other vessels. The loss of these ships, which were laden with winter stores for our men, was a great calamity: for by it they were deprived of the clothing, blanketing, provisions, and hospital necessaries, which would have been of infinite value to them. Our officers and men had never dreamed of such cold as they had to encounter there. If they put their hands on any metal substance in the open air, the skin was torn from them by the intense cold. They were often drenched with rain, and were insufficiently clothed and fed. Cholera and other diseases broke out among them; so that of those who died, five out of six were sent to their death by other agencies than the guns of the Russians. "The hospitals for the sick and wounded at Scutari," says McCarthy, "were in a wretchedly disorganised condition. They were, for the most part, in an absolutely chaotic condition as regards arrangement and supply. In some instances medical stores were left to decay at Varna, or were found lying useless in the holds of vessels in Balaklava Bay, which were needed for the wounded at Scutari. The medical officers were able and zealous men; the stores were provided and paid for so far as our Government was concerned; but the stores were not brought to the medical men. These had their hands all but idle; their eyes and souls tortured by the sight of the sufferings which they were unable to relieve for want of the commonest appliances of the hospital. The most extraordinary instances of blunder and confusion were constantly coming to light.

Great consignments of boots arrived, and were found to be all for the left foot. Mules, for conveyance of stores, were contracted for and delivered, but delivered so that they came into the hands of the Russians and not of us. Shameful frauds were perpetrated in the instance of some of the contractors of preserved meat. 'One man's preserved meat,' exclaimed *Punch*, with bitter humour, 'is another man's poison.'

But in order to mitigate this state of things, two great movements were set on foot. "The *Times* Fund" and "The Patriotic Fund," were started, and Florence Nightingale and her band of nurses went out to the hospitals.

It has been mentioned that the *Times* correspondent did good service in drawing public attention to the sufferings of the brave soldiers who, one after another, had won the battles. The people were moved with compassion, and excited into a strong desire of helpfulness. The Rev. Sydney Godolphin Osborne and Sir Stafford Northcote wrote letters that caused the sympathy of the English people to deepen and increase; and on the 12th of October, Sir Robert Peel, the eldest son of the great statesman, proposed the immediate formation of a fund in connection with the *Times* newspaper, and himself contributed £200. In a very short time the sum reached £25,462. One of the *Times* staff, Mr. Macdonald, was sent to the East to administer the sum, which he did to the satisfaction of every one.

On the 13th of October a royal commission was issued, with the Prince Consort at its head, and under its auspices "The Patriotic Fund" was started, "for relief of the orphans and widows of soldiers, sailors, and marines who may fall in the present war." Her Majesty was the first subscriber, and she sent £1000 to the treasurer; the Prince Consort sent £500; the Bank of England and the Corporation of London £2000. At a meeting held at the Mansion House £16,000 were subscribed; and before the

year closed, the sum amounted to nearly £500,000. From this generous supply of money the wants of the soldiers were met, and speedy relief was provided for their wives and widows.

But while this public effort was being made, there were individual acts of kindness, which proved to the soldiers that their countrymen and women were not unmindful of them. The Queen herself, and those of her daughters who were old enough, made woollen comforters, mittens, and other warm coverings, which were sent out to the men. The Prince sent great fur-coats to the officers, and a large present of tobacco to the men. Ladies in thousands of homes were busy from morning to night in working for the soldiers. The men were most grateful for everything that was done for them. Colonel Upton wrote, acknowledging the gift that had been received—"No one but those who have lived the life very recently, can know how the hearts of those who have been enduring toil, and fatigue, and exposure, are gladdened and nerved by the knowledge that their Queen, as well as his royal highness, had been heard expressing their sympathy and warm interest in their sufferings, and admiration of all that has been done by them. *It is a sort of exultation that makes out of every one two at least.*"

But the best effort of all that was made on behalf of the soldiers was that of the Nightingale Mission. The cry that reached England was this:—"Nurses are wanted as well as necessaries at the camp." Five hundred sisters of mercy had been sent from France to nurse the French soldiers; and it was soon proved that we had sisters of mercy too, who deserved, if they did not bear, the name. There was a lady in England, the youngest daughter of William Shore Nightingale, Esq. of Embley Park, Hampshire, and Leigh Hurst, in Derbyshire, for whom the work of nursing had always a fascination. As a child she was engaged in help-

ing the poor. In 1854, she visited the establishment called "The Protestant Sisters of Mercy," which had been instituted at Kaiserworth on the Rhine. On her return she tried to put into execution, among the poor of her father's neighbourhood, the system she had seen working at Kaiserworth. But there was a greater work for Florence Nightingale to do. Lady Mary Forester had made a proposition that a band of female nurses should be formed and sent to the East. The Secretary at War, Mr. Sidney Herbert, approved and supported this proposition, and a staff of thirty-seven nurses was formed. Mr. Herbert's wife was a friend of Miss Nightingale, and knew her skill and goodness of heart; and Mr. Herbert wrote to Miss Nightingale asking her to accept the authority and responsibility of the mission, assuring her that her example would "multiply the good to all time." Miss Nightingale gladly complied, and went out to Scutari, accompanied by some women of rank like her own, the Rev. Mr. and Mrs. Bracebridge, and a trained staff of nurses. "They speedily reduced chaos into order; and from the time of their landing in Scutari, there was at least one department of the business of war which was never again a subject of complaint." Miss Stanley, sister of the late Dean of Westminster, went out with another band of forty ladies and nurses, two months later, and all worked diligently together. One poor soldier badly wounded, said, "I can't help crying when I see them. Only think of Englishwomen coming out here to nurse us; it's so home-like and comfortable." Another speaking of Miss Nightingale, said, "She could not speak to all of us; but we could kiss her shadow on the wall."

There was one woman in England who could not go to nurse the sick soldiers, but whose thoughts were constantly with them; but she did what she could, and on the 6th December, the following letter to the Secretary of War, was written by the Queen:—

"Would you tell Mrs. Herbert that I begged she would let me see frequently the accounts she receives from Miss Nightingale or Mrs. Bracebridge, as I hear no details of the wounded, though I see so many from officers, etc., about the battlefield; and naturally the former must interest me more than any one. Let Mrs. Herbert also know that I wish Miss Nightingale and the ladies would tell these poor, noble, wounded and sick men, that no one takes a warmer interest, or feels more for their sufferings, or admires their courage and heroism, more than their Queen. Day and night she thinks of her beloved troops; so does the Prince. Beg Mrs. Herbert to communicate these my words to those ladies, as I know that our sympathy is much valued by these noble fellows."

This letter was read in the hospitals; while tears ran down the manly faces of some of the soldiers, and others shouted, "God save the Queen."





CHAPTER XV.

From War to Peace.

“And let the fair, white-winged peacemaker fly
To happy havens under all the sky ;
And mix the seasons and the golden hours,
Till each man find his own in all mens’ good,
And all men work in noble brotherhood.”

IN the meantime the royal family had its own troubles to bear ; one of which, at least, was exceedingly hard, especially to the Queen. After the resignation of Lord Palmerston, certain journals began to throw out insinuations that the Prince had exerted undue influence in regard to the management of the affairs of the country. “It was gravely put forward, as a great political crime, that the Prince was occasionally present at the interviews between the Queen and her Ministers, that the Queen discussed political questions with him, that he ventured to have opinions on matters of policy, foreign and domestic, and that these had weight in guiding and strengthening the opinion of her Majesty.” How could it be otherwise ? To whom should the Queen look but to her husband, especially

as the Prince had proved himself so sensible and careful in all the delicate circumstances of his lot? But other stories were added which had positively no foundation in truth, until the *Spectator* said:—"A whisper, which was first insinuated for party purposes, has grown into a roar, and a constructive hint has swelled into a positive and monstrous fiction. . . . The story, not only told in all parts of England a day or two ago, but by some believed, was, that Prince Albert was a traitor to his Queen, that he had been impeached for high treason, and finally, that, on a charge of high treason, he had been arrested and committed to the Tower." Day by day the attacks became more intense and bitter, until at last there was no kind of treason to the country of which the Prince was not declared to have been guilty. The Prince, "badgered for four weeks by the ultras of both parties, bore the contumely as bravely as he could, but his feeling of honour was very keen, and he looked very anxious and ill." Naturally the Queen became exceedingly indignant and pained. "In attacking the Prince," she wrote to Lord Aberdeen, "who is one and the same with the Queen herself, the throne is assailed; and she must say, she little expected that any portion of her subjects would thus requite the unceasing labours of the Prince."

Lord Aberdeen wrote in reply to this letter:—"It is much to be desired that some notice of this subject may be taken in Parliament, where, by being treated in a proper manner, it may be effectually stopped. It cannot be denied that the position of the Prince is somewhat anomalous, and has not been specially provided for by the constitution; but the ties of nature, and the dictates of common-sense, are more powerful than constitutional fictions, and Lord Aberdeen can only say that he has always considered it an inestimable blessing that your Majesty should possess so able, so zealous, and so disinterested an adviser. . . . The Prince has now been so long before the eyes of the whole

country, his conduct is so invariably devoted to the public good, and his life so perfectly unattackable, that Lord Aberdeen has not the slightest apprehension of any serious consequences arising from these contemptible exhibitions of malevolence and faction." The Prince wrote to Stockmar:—"You will scarcely credit that my being committed to the Tower was believed all over the country—nay, even that the Queen had been arrested! People surrounded the Tower in thousands to see us brought to it! On the other hand, I hear from Manchester, where Bright, Cobden, Gibson, Wilson, etc., held their annual meeting, that they made very light of it, and laughed at all the accusations. It has been a great worry to me, for the affair was too serious not to merit the gravest and closest consideration. It was anything but pleasant to me, amidst it all, that so many people could look upon me as a rogue and traitor; and I shall not be at ease until I see the debate in Parliament well over. . . . Victoria has taken the whole affair greatly to heart, and was excessively indignant at the attacks. Finally, if our courage and cheerfulness have not suffered, our stomachs and digestions have, as they commonly do when the feelings are kept long upon the stretch. Since yesterday I have been quite miserable."

Parliament met on the 31st of January, and no time was lost in refuting the calumnies which had been heaped upon the Prince. Lord John Russell and Lord Aberdeen, by making simple statements of facts, showed how false the lies had been which were in circulation respecting him. Lord Derby and Mr. Walpole and others spoke in the debate, and Lord Campbell supported with his high legal authority the right of the Prince to advise the Sovereign in all matters of state. In the wisest way the Prince was entirely vindicated, and a happy issue out of all their sufferings was granted to him and his loving wife.

Next day the Queen wrote to Baron Stockmar:—"I write to you in the fulness of joy at the triumphant refutation of all the calumnies in the two Houses of Parliament last night. The position of my beloved lord and master has been defined for once and all, and his merits have been acknowledged on all sides most duly. There was an immense concourse of people assembled when we went to the House of Lords, and the people were very friendly."

A few days later, on the 10th of February, the anniversary of the royal marriage came round; and, perhaps, the Queen and Prince were all the more happy because of the clouds which had gathered about them. Her Majesty wrote:—"This blessed day is full of joyful and tender emotions. Fourteen happy and blessed years have passed, and I confidently trust many more will, and find us in old age, as we are now, happily and devotedly united! Trials we must have: but what are they if we are together!"

The royal children had prepared for this day one of those graceful surprises with which they generally marked the recurrence of the wedding-day of their father and mother. The Baroness Bunsen was staying at Windsor Castle at the time, and gives us the following account of the rejoicings:—"We followed the Queen and Prince Albert a long way, through one large room after another, till we came to one where hung a red curtain, which was presently drawn aside for a representation of the four seasons, studied and contrived by the royal children as a surprise to the Queen, in celebration of the day. First appeared Princess Alice as the Spring, scattering flowers, and reciting verses which were taken from Thomson's *Seasons*. She moved gracefully and spoke in a distinct and pleasing manner, with excellent modulation, and a tone of voice sweet and penetrating like that of the Queen. Then the curtain was drawn, and the scene changed, and the Princess Royal represented Summer, with Prince Arthur stretched upon the sheaves as if tired

with the heat and harvest work ; another change, and Prince Alfred, with a crown of vine leaves and the skin of a panther, representing Autumn—looking very well. Then followed a change to a winter landscape, and the Prince of Wales represented Winter, with a long cloak covered with icicles (or what seemed so), and the Princess Louise, a charming little muffled up figure, busy keeping up a fire ; the Prince reciting (as all had done) passages more or less modified from Thomson. Then followed the last change, when all the seasons were grouped together, and far behind on a height, appeared Princess Helena, with a long white veil hanging on both sides down to her feet, holding a long cross, and pronouncing a blessing on the Queen and Prince. These verses were composed for the occasion. I understood them to say that Saint Helena, remembering her own British extraction, came to pronounce a benediction on the rulers of the country ; and I think it must have been so intended, because Helena, the mother of Constantine (said to have discovered the remains of the cross which bore the Saviour), was a native of Britain, and is always represented leaning upon a large cross. But your father understood that Britannia was intended as blessing the royal pair. In either view of the subject, the Princess Helena looked very charming. This was the close, but by the command of the Queen the curtain was again withdrawn, and we saw the whole royal family together, who came down severally from their raised platform ; also the baby Prince, Leopold, was carried in by his nurse, and looked at us all with his eyes, stretching out his arms to be taken by the Prince Consort."

In the *Life of Sir Charles Lyell* there are some interesting anecdotes of the Queen and the royal family referring to this time in their life. Sir Charles paid a visit to Osborne, and describes the house as "a very pleasant residence, like a small German principality palace." He also went to Balmoral, and says—"The day I went to dine there, Saturday

last, I had first a long walk—Sir James Clark and I—with Mr. Birch and his pupil, a pleasing, lively boy, whose animated description of the conjuror, or Wizard of the North, whom they had seen a few days before, was very amusing. He (the wizard) had cut to pieces mamma's pocket handkerchief, then darned it and ironed it, so that it was as entire as ever; he had fired a pistol, and caused five or six watches to go through Gibb's (one of their footmen) head, and all were tied to a chair on Gibb's other side, and so forth; 'but papa knows how all these things are done, and had the watches really gone through Gibbs's head he could hardly have looked so well, though he was confounded.' Sometimes I walked alone with the child, who asked me the names of plants, and to let him see spiders, etc., through my magnifying glass; sometimes with the tutor, whom I continued to like more as we became better acquainted. After our ramble of two hours and a half through some wild scenery, I was sent for to join another party, where I found the Queen, Prince, and Lord John by a deep pool on the river Dee, fishing for trout and salmon.

"After the Queen had entered the castle the Prince kept me so long, and we kept one another so late, talking on all kinds of subjects, that a messenger came from her Majesty, saying it was only a quarter of an hour to dinner-time.

"After the ladies had gone to the drawing-room we had much lively talk, which the Prince promoted greatly, telling some amusing stories himself, and encouraging others by laughing at theirs.

"Next day I went to church. The prayer for the parish, magistracy, Queen, and royal family, judges, ministers of religion, parliament, and the whole nation was just such as you would have liked, and in excellent taste, with nothing which a republican jealous of equality could, I think, have objected to, and which I believe our Sovereign and her husband would thoroughly appreciate the simplicity of.

They shoved the box on the end of a long pole to Queen, and Prince, and maids-of-honour, as to all the rest of the congregation, and each dropped in their piece of coin. After church I had much conversation alone with Prince Albert, whose mind is in full activity on a variety of grave subjects, while he is invigorating his body with field sports."

We have already referred to the Queen's thoughtfulness for her soldiers during the war, and shall have to do so again; but very naturally the subject filled the minds of all English people. On the 25th of January 1855, Lord Syndhurst announced his intention of moving in the House of Lords the following resolution:—"That in the opinion of this House, the expedition to the Crimea was undertaken by her Majesty's Government with very inadequate means, and without due caution or sufficient inquiry into the nature and the extent of the resistance to be expected from the enemy; and that the neglect and mismanagement from the Government, in the conduct of the enterprise, have led to the most disastrous results." On the twenty-sixth, Mr. Roebuck brought forward his motion for a select committee to inquire into the condition of the army before Sebastopol. The vote on this motion was the occasion of the resignation of Lord Aberdeen and his ministry. The Queen wrote a letter to Lord John Russell, that, as moments were precious, and the time was rolling on, she looked to him to form a ministry, and added, "it would give her particular satisfaction if Lord Palmerston would join in this formation." "Lord Palmerston was gratified to find that the Queen would let bygones be bygones, and would not remember to his disadvantage the unpleasant incidents of former years." In the end Lord Palmerston became Premier, and soon after the Sebastopol committee was formed.

In the meantime the state of things at the seat of war grew somewhat better. Miss Nightingale wrote to a friend from Balaclava:—"Fancy working five nights out of seven

in the trenches! Fancy being thirty-six hours in them at a stretch, as they were all December, lying down, or half lying down, often forty-eight hours with no food but *raw* salt pork, sprinkled with sugar, rum, and biscuit; nothing hot, because the exhausted soldier could not collect his own fuel, as he was expected to do, to cook his own rations; and fancy, through all this, the army preserving their courage and patience as they have done, and being now eager (the old ones more than the young ones) to be led even into the trenches. There was something sublime in the spectacle."

Such heroism touched all hearts, certainly that of the Queen. Her thoughts were exceedingly kind and sympathetic; and when she could she put them into action. In the early spring, large numbers of the troops who had been wounded, or were disabled by sickness, came home to be nursed. The Queen resolved to visit them herself, and see how they were cared for, and in what condition they were; and therefore, on the 3d of March, she and the Prince Consort, taking the two eldest Princes with them, went to the Military Hospital at Chatham. The outcome of this visit was the following letter to Lord Panmure, who was Secretary of State for War:—"The Queen is very anxious to bring before Lord Panmure the subject which she mentioned to him the other night—viz., hospitals for our sick and wounded soldiers. These are absolutely necessary, and *now* is the moment to have them built, for no doubt there would be no difficulty in obtaining the money requisite for the purpose, so strong is the feeling now existing in the public mind for improvements of all kinds connected with the army, and the well-being and comfort of the soldiers.

"Nothing can exceed the attention paid to these poor men in the barracks at Chatham, or rather Fort Pitt and Brompton, and they are in that respect very comfortable; but the buildings are bad, the wards more like prisons than

hospitals, with the windows so high that no one can look out of them, and the most of the wards are small, with hardly space to walk between the beds. There is no dining-room or hall, so that the poor men must have their dinners in the same room in which they sleep, and in which some may be dying, and at any rate suffering, while others are at their meals.

"The proposition to have hulks prepared for their reception will do very well at first, but it would not, the Queen thinks, do for any length of time. A hulk is a very gloomy place, and these poor men require their spirits to be cheered as much as to have their physical sufferings attended to. The Queen is particularly anxious on this subject, which is, she may truly say, constantly in her thoughts, as indeed is everything connected with her beloved troops, who have fought so bravely, and borne so heroically all their sufferings and privations. The Queen hopes before long to visit the hospitals at Portsmouth also, and to see in what state they are."

The Queen's suggestion was not allowed to drop; and in time the great military hospital at Netley was built, in accordance with her Majesty's wish.

An event occurred at the time of the visit of the Queen to Chatham which filled the hearts of the English people with awe—this was the death of the Ozar. Nothing had been heard of his illness until the announcement of his death was made. The losses of his troops had caused him the greatest grief, and the defeats which, one after another, had attended the battles, had worn away his courage and hope. He succumbed to an attack of pulmonic apoplexy after an influenza, which lasted only two or three days. It was hoped that his death would bring the prospects of peace nearer; but the hope was soon dispelled, for the Emperor Alexander II., on the very day of his accession, published a manifesto which showed that he meant to

endeavour to retrieve the losses of Russia, and win power and glory for her.

Some time afterward, the Emperor of the French came to England, accompanied by the Empress Eugenie. Some uneasiness had been created by his declaring that he would himself go to the Crimea and conduct the war in person, which resolve he subsequently relinquished. He was received with great cordiality in England, and the honours due to our ally were freely accorded him by the Queen and her people. He seemed to enjoy his visit very much indeed. There was a state visit to the Crystal Palace, a review of the Household troops, a ball, and various other ceremonies. The Queen says—"How strange to think that I, the grand-daughter of George III., should dance with the Emperor Napoleon, nephew of England's great enemy, now my nearest and most intimate ally." The Queen records that before he left "the Emperor wrote in Bertie's autograph book the following very pretty lines"—they were written in German, but we give the English version—

"Youth of soul! unstained and pure—
Innocent and fresh in feeling—
Choose and ponder, but be sure
World's praise never sways thy dealing.
Though the crowds with plaudits hail thee,
Though their calumnies assail thee,
Swerve not; but remember, youth,
Minstrel praises oft betray;
Narrow is the path of truth,
Duty threads 'twixt chasms her way."

In June the army sustained a loss in the death of Lord Raglan. Perhaps no one can write more beautiful letters of condolence to widows, filled with sorrow for the death of their husbands, than our Queen. She knows how to do it now, for sorrow has taught her; but before her own loss, the circumstances of those who had been stripped of their protectors and best friends always appealed strongly to her

sympathies. The letter written by her Majesty to Lady Raglan is a good specimen :—

“Dear Lady Raglan—Words cannot convey all I feel at the irreparable loss you have sustained, and I, and the country also, in your noble, gallant, and excellent husband, whose loyalty and devotion to his Sovereign and country were unbounded. We both feel most deeply for you and your daughters, to whom this blow must be most severe and sudden. He was so strong, and his health had borne the bad climate, the great fatigues and anxieties, so well ever since he left England, that, though we were much alarmed at hearing of his illness, we were full of hopes of his speedy recovery.

“We must bow to the will of God; but to be taken away thus, on the eve of the successful result of so much labour, so much suffering, and so much anxiety, is hard indeed.

“We feel much, too, for the brave army whom he was so proud of, who will be sadly cast down at losing their gallant commander, who had led them so often to victory and glory.

“If sympathy can be any consolation, you have it, for we all have alike to mourn, and no one more than I, who have lost a faithful and devoted servant, in whom I had the greatest confidence. We both most anxiously hope that your health, and that of your daughters, may not materially suffer from this dreadful shock.—Believe me always, my dear Lady Raglan, yours very sincerely, VICTORIA R.”

In August the Queen went to Paris on a return visit to the Emperor and Empress of the French. The Prince Consort was of course with her; and the Prince of Wales and the Princess Royal accompanied their parents. Paris was *en fête*, and looking at its best; and the Queen was everywhere received with the greatest enthusiasm. Prince Albert's birthday came round while they were in Paris, and the Queen thus writes of it :—“Sunday, the 26th of

August.—This dearest of days was not ushered in as usual, nor spent at home, as I could have wished ; but my dear Albert was pleased, and it was spent with those who truly appreciated him. May God ever bless and protect him for many years to come, and may we ever be together to our lives' end."

The Queen's sister, the Princess Hohenlohe-Langenburg, wrote to her—"After that magnificent Paris, with all its splendour, and brilliancy, and *fêtes*, etc., it will be like a golden dream to you, when you are in the Highlands amongst hills, and woods, and glens, but it will be very refreshing, and quieting, and agreeable. May you enjoy it, my dearest Victoria."

The Queen did enjoy it very much, and all the more so, because the good news came to her there that Sebastopol was taken. We cannot do better than reproduce a leaf from her Majesty's journal to show how the news was received. "Balmoral, 10th September 1855.—All were in constant expectation of more telegraphic despatches. At half-past ten o'clock two arrived, one for me and one for Lord Granville. I began reading mine, which was from Lord Clarendon, with details from Marshal Pellissier of the further destruction of the Russian ships ; and Lord Granville said, 'I have still better news ;' on which he read from General Simpson : 'Sebastopol is in the hands of the Allies.' God be praised for it. Our delight was great, but we could hardly believe the good news ; and from having so long, so anxiously expected it, one could not realise the actual fact. Albert said they should go at once and light the bonfire which had been prepared when the false report of the fall of the town arrived last year, and had remained ever since waiting to be lit. On the 5th of November, the day of the battle of Inkermann, the wind upset it : strange to say, now again, most strangely, it only seemed to wait for our return to be lit.

"The new house seems to be lucky, indeed, for, from the first moment of our arrival, we have had good news. In a few minutes Albert and all the gentlemen, in every species of attire, sallied forth, followed by all the servants, and gradually by all the population of the village, reapers, gillies, workmen, up to the top of the cairn. We waited and saw them light the bonfire, accompanied by general cheering. It blazed forth brilliantly, and we could see the numerous figures surrounding it; some dancing, all shouting, Ross playing his pipes, and Grant and Macdonald firing off guns continually, while poor old Francois d'Albertancon lighted a number of squibs below, the greater part of which would not go off. About three-quarters of an hour after, Albert came down, and said the scene had been wild and exciting beyond everything. The people had been drinking healths in whisky, and were in great ecstasy. The whole house seemed in a wonderful state of excitement. The boys were with difficulty awakened, and when at last this was the case, they begged leave to go up to the top of the cairn. We remained till a quarter to twelve, and just as I was undressing, all the people came down under the windows, the pipes playing, and the people singing, firing off guns and cheering first for me, then for Albert, the Emperor of the French, and the downfall of Sebastopol."

All the country, and indeed all the other countries, joined in the rejoicing at the good news, for all saw that the fall of Sebastopol was the beginning of the end of the war. Even before the year closed pacific movements were commenced, and Sunday, the fourth of the following May, was set apart as a day of thanksgiving for the conclusion of peace. The rejoicings of the people were almost wild during the days that followed. London was illuminated on the twenty-ninth, and the displays were the greatest that had ever been witnessed. The Government granted the sum of £8000 to defray the expenses; and a day of gladness was held such

as no one will forget. In Edinburgh and Dublin, and most of the large towns, similar demonstrations occurred. One of the most remarkable celebrations was at Exeter, "where 10,000 persons were regaled with a dinner of good old English fare in the market-place; and 4000 children were treated with buns and coffee later in the day. The tables on which the dinner was served were 3500 yards in length; 10,000 pounds of beef, 5000 pounds of plum pudding, 9850 loaves (each weighing three-quarters of a pound), and 2250 gallons of beer, constituted the material part of the feast."

Naturally, the Queen wished to reward the soldiers who had fought for her so bravely. Already there had been a very affecting ceremony, which she herself describes in a letter to the King of the Belgians:—"Ernest will have told you what a beautiful and touching sight and ceremony (the first of the kind ever witnessed in England) the distribution of the medals was. From the highest prince of the blood to the lowest private, all received the same distinction for the bravest conduct in the severest actions; and the rough hand of the brave and honest private soldier came, for the first time, in contact with that of their Sovereign and their Queen. Noble fellows! I own I feel as if they were my own children—my heart beats for them as for my nearest and dearest! They were so touched, so pleased—many, I hear, cried, and they won't hear of giving up their medals to have their names engraved upon them, for fear they should not receive the identical one put into their hands by me! Several came by in a sadly mutilated state. None created more interest, or is more gallant than young Sir Thomas Troubridge, who had, at Inkermann, one leg and the foot of the other carried away by a round shot, and continued commanding his battery till the battle was over, refusing to be carried away, only desiring his shattered limbs to be raised in order to prevent too great a hæmorrhage. He was

dragged by in a Bath chair, and when I gave him his medal I told him I should make him one of my aides-de-camp for his very gallant conduct, to which he replied, 'I am amply repaid for everything.' One must revere such soldiers as that."

When the men came home, the Queen welcomed them, and at Aldershot she addressed them:—"Officers, non-commissioned officers, and soldiers! I wish personally to convey through you, to the regiments assembled here this day, my hearty welcome on their return to England, in health and full efficiency. Say to them that I have watched anxiously over the difficulties and hardships which they have so nobly borne, that I have mourned with deep sorrow for the brave men who have fallen in their country's cause, and that I have felt proud of that valour which, with their gallant allies, they have displayed on every field. I thank God that your dangers are over, while the glory of your deeds remain; but I know that, should your services be again required, you will be animated with the same devotion which in the Crimea has rendered you invincible."

The *Times* says:—"No sooner had her Majesty concluded this brief harangue, which she delivered with that propriety of emphasis, and the silvery sweetness of intonation for which she is so remarkable, than a cry of 'God save the Queen' sprang to every lip. Helmets, bear-skins, and shakos were thrown into the air, the dragoons waved their sabres, and a shout of loyal acclamation, caught up from line to line, rang through the hills. It was a grand and spirit-stirring sight, full of interest and excitement, and not to be witnessed without deep emotion."

The Queen instituted a new naval and military decoration, called "The Victoria Cross," to be given to officers, subordinates, private soldiers, or common sailors, who, in active war, had performed some signal act of valour; and so made glad many of those who had risked death among the

dangers of the Crimea. And then she, in common with her subjects, gladly settled down to the quiet of peace. It may be that a mistake was made in beginning the war at all, but every one thanked God when at last it came to an end.

Two years later occurred the sad and disastrous event—the Indian Mutiny. The Indians feared the Queen would compel them to be Christians; and they hoped that the British rule would, according to a native prophecy, cease in 1857. There was great discontent in the native army, and at length an insurrection. The sufferings of the English residents were terrible, many of them being murdered most savagely. It was no easy task to quell the mutiny, and brave men's lives were sacrificed in the attempt—Sir Henry Lawrence and General Havelock among them. Nana Sahib's treachery, the horrible treatment of English women, the massacre at Cawnpore, and the well into which the women and children were thrown, were incidents too fearful to dwell upon. We can but pray—God save our Queen and country from another such tale of atrocities.





CHAPTER XVI.

The First Wedding in the Family.

“To hear, to heed, to wed,
Fair lot that maidens choose,
Thy mother’s tenderest words are said,
Thy face no more she views.”

THERE is one thing that always goes on, whether the times be those of peace or of war—young people will be falling in love with each other, and there will be marrying and giving in marriage. The great crisis of the war in the Crimea had arrived, and all the world was thinking and wondering about it, when among the hills of Balmoral, in the Highland home of the royal family, a young man and an English maiden were becoming so engrossed with each other, that nothing mattered to them but their own and each other’s future.

“The Prince Fritz William comes here to-morrow evening,” wrote Prince Albert, on the 15th September 1855. What he came for was very well known by the father and mother of our Princess Royal. Prince Frederick

William of Prussia had come over to England, armed with the consent and good wishes of his parents and the King of Prussia, to solicit the heart and hand of the Princess Victoria Adelaide Mary Louisa of England. The young people were not strangers to each other, and the heart of the Prince had for some time been set upon winning the English maiden for his bride. The plan that he adopted, and the success which he met with, are told in the letters of the Prince Albert to his confidential friend and adviser, Baron Stockmar:—

“The event you are interested in reached an active stage this morning, after breakfast. The young man laid his proposal before us, with the permission of his parents and of the King. We accepted it for ourselves, but requested him to hold it in suspense as regards the other party, till after her confirmation. Till then, all the simple unconstraint of girlhood is to continue undisturbed. In the spring, the young man wishes to make his offer to herself, and possibly to come to us, along with his parents and his engaged sister. The seventeenth birthday is to have elapsed before the actual marriage is thought of, and this will, therefore, not come off till the following spring.

“The secret is to be kept. . . . the parents and the King being informed of the true state of the case forthwith—namely, that we, the parents, and the young man are under a pledge, so far as such pledge is possible, and that the young lady herself is to be asked after her confirmation. In the meantime, there will be much to discuss; and I would entreat of you to come to us soon, that we may talk over matters face to face, and hear what you have to advise. The young gentleman is again to leave us on the twenty-eighth. In this matter he placed himself at our disposal; and I suggested fourteen days as not too long and not too short for a visit of the kind. I have been much pleased with him. His chiefly prominent qualities are great straight-

forwardness, frankness, and honesty. He appears to be free from prejudices and pre-eminently well-intentioned.

"He speaks of himself as personally greatly attracted by Vicky. That she will have no objection to make, I regard as probable."

There was great interest for the Queen in watching this love affair of her eldest daughter. The girl was very young, but so was her Majesty, in that beautiful October, seventeen years before, when another Prince came to England on a similar errand. The Prince wrote a few days later—"Victoria is greatly excited—still all goes smoothly and prudently. The Prince is really in love, and the little lady does her best to please him. . . . The day after to-morrow the young gentleman takes his departure. We have to-day received the answers from Coblenz, where they are in raptures; the communication has been made to the King at Stolzenfels, and has been hailed by him with cordial satisfaction. They are quite at one with us as to the postponement of the betrothal till after the confirmation, and the marriage till after the seventeenth birthday.

"Lord Clarendon sends warm congratulations on the alliance, and has heard the highest encomiums on the young man. Lord Palmerston says—'He trusts that the event, when it takes place, will contribute as much to the happiness of those more immediately concerned, and to the comfort of your Majesty and the royal family, as it undoubtedly will to the interests of the two countries, and of Europe in general.' Now, however, you must come to us, for we have very much to talk over."

It was very well for the parents to decide that the young man must not yet tell the story of his love to his chosen companion, but youth is impatient, and he could not do otherwise than wish her to know. Moreover, it would not be easy to keep it from her, for she would herself discover the truth. "We divine by intuition those who love us," said

the French Emperor in a letter to the Prince Consort. And that is true. It is seldom that a declaration of love comes altogether as a surprise to any girl; and perhaps had young Prince Frederick William held his peace, the Princess would all the same have guessed the truth. However that may have been, he found his opportunity, and embraced it. The afternoon of the 29th September was fine and pleasant, and the royal party rode up *Craig-na-Ban*. The Prince was so fortunate as to find a sprig of white heather, the emblem of good luck; and he took it as an omen of good, and presented it to the Princess, telling her his hopes. He had the joy to find that his love was returned.

Her father continues thus the story of the betrothal:—
“Prince Fritz William left us yesterday. Vicky has indeed behaved quite admirably, as well during the close explanation on Saturday as in the self-command which she displayed subsequently, and at the party. She manifested towards Fritz and ourselves the most child-like simplicity and candour, and the best feeling. The young people are ardently in love with one another; and the purity, innocence, and unselfishness of the young man have been, on his part, equally touching. Abundance of tears were shed. While deep visible revolutions in the emotional natures of the two young people, and of the mother, were taking place, by which they were powerfully agitated, my feeling was rather one of cheerful satisfaction and gratitude to God, for bringing across our path so much that was noble and good, where it may, nay must, conduce to the happiness for life of those whom He has endowed with those qualities, and who are in themselves so dear to me.”

No official declaration of the state of things was made yet—the time had not come—but it was not long before a rumour got abroad, and the newspapers took the matter up. As usual, suspicion of the motives of the Prince Consort took possession of the editorial mind in some quarters. The

Times was especially bitter against the project, and wrote of Prussia as "a paltry German dynasty," which could not survive the downfall of Russian influence. It declared that the future husband of the Princess Royal was destined to enter the Russian service, "and to pass these years, which flattering anticipation now destines to a crown, in ignominious attendance as a general officer on the levee of his Imperial master, having lost even the privilege of his birth, which is conceded to no German in Russia." The paper asked the English people to contemplate the probability of their Princess becoming anti-English in feeling, and being sent back to them, at no distant date, as an exile and a fugitive.

The Prince and the Queen were pained by this, but perhaps the young people themselves did not care much about it. Any one of sense might have known that the Prince could not hold the happiness of his own child other than very dear to him, and he would not be likely to imperil it. But it showed how little the Prince was understood, and how eager some people, whose prejudices were bitter and unreasonable, were to suspect him.

But in the meantime the Princess, aided by her father, commenced the study of subjects, some knowledge of which her future position would render necessary. In March of the following year the confirmation of the Princess took place in the private chapel of Windsor Castle. Her father led her in, and she was followed by her godfather, the King of the Belgians, and her mother, her Majesty the Queen. The royal children and most of the members of the royal family were present; and all the ministers, officers of state, and members of the household. The Bishop of Oxford read the preface, and the Archbishop of Canterbury performed the ceremony of confirmation; and the next morning the Princess, with the Queen and the Prince Albert, took the sacrament.

Two months later, an accident happened to the Princess,

which might have been most disastrous. She was sealing a letter at a table when her muslin sleeve caught fire, and she was instantly in flames. Fortunately, Miss Anderson was in the room giving a music lesson to the Princess Alice, and she and Miss Hildyard sprang at once to her assistance, and caught up the hearth-rug and put out the flames. The Princess behaved with wonderful courage and self-control; but she was very badly burned. Sir Benjamin Brodie was sent for, and in time a good cure, although a painful and tedious one, was wrought.

A little later, on the 14th of April, the Princess Beatrice was born, and a few weeks afterwards the Prince went to Manchester and gave addresses. He also unveiled a statue to commemorate the visit of the Queen six years before to Manchester. The statue had been erected in Peel Park, chiefly by the subscriptions of 80,000 Sunday-school teachers and scholars.

In May the official announcement of the intended marriage was made to Parliament, by a message from the Queen, who expressed her confidence in the assistance of Parliament in enabling her to make such a provision for her eldest daughter, with a view to the marriage, as may be suitable to the dignity of the crown and the honour of the country. The Prince would have been glad if, once for all, the question of the dowry of the royal children could have been settled then, but the ministers would not take that responsibility. Almost the entire house, however, supported the Government proposal to settle a dowry of £40,000 upon the Princess, which was exceedingly gratifying to her father.

The holiday of the royal family that year, spent in the Highlands, was the last at which they were altogether an unbroken family. We may give an interesting page from the Queen's journal, since it not only refers to the Princess, but gives an interesting account of one of the Queen's visits

to the old women on the estate:—"Albert went out with Alfred for the day, and I walked out with the two girls and Lady Churchill, stopped at the shop and made some purchases for poor people and others; drove a little way, got out, and walked up the hill to Balnacroft, Mrs. P. Farquharson's, and she walked round with us to some of the cottages to show me where the poor people lived, and to tell who I was. Before we went into any, we met an old woman, who, Mrs. Farquharson said, was very poor, eighty-eight years old, and mother to the former distiller. I gave her a warm petticoat, and the tears rolled down her old cheeks, and she took my hands, and prayed God to bless me. It was very touching.

"I went into a small cabin of Kitty Kears, who is eighty-six years old, quite erect, and who welcomed us with a great air of dignity. She sat down and spun. I gave her also a warm petticoat. She said, 'May the Lord ever attend ye and yours, here and hereafter; and may the Lord be a guide to ye, and keep ye from all harm.' She was quite surprised at Vicky's height; great interest is taken in her. We went on to a cottage (formerly Jean Gordon's) to visit old Widow Symons, who is past fourscore, with a nice, rosy face, but was bent quite double. She was most friendly, shaking hands with us all, asking which was I, and repeating many kind blessings. 'May the Lord attend ye with mirth and with joy; may He ever be with ye in this world, and when ye leave it.' To Vicky, when told she was going to be married, she said, 'May the Lord be a guide to ye in your future, and may every happiness attend ye.' She was very talkative; and when I said I hoped to see her again, she expressed an expectation that she 'should be called any day'; and so did Kitty Kears.

"We went into three other cottages—to Mrs. Symons's (daughter-in-law to the old widow living next door), who

had 'an unwell boy,' then across a little burn to another old woman's, and afterwards peeped into Blair, the fiddler's. We drove back, and got out again to visit old Mrs. Grant, who is so tidy and clean, and to whom I gave a dress and handkerchief, and she said, 'You are too kind to me. You are ower kind to me; you give me more every year, and I get older every year.' After talking some time with her, she said, 'I am happy to see ye looking so nice.' She had tears in her eyes, and speaking of Vicky's going, said, 'I am very sorry, and I think she is sorry hersel', and saying she feared she would not see her (the princess) again, said, 'I am very sorry I said that, but I meant no harm; I always say just what I think, not what is *fut* (fit).' Dear old lady; she is such a pleasant person.

"Really, the affection of these good people, who are so hearty, and so happy to see you taking interest in everything, is very touching and gratifying."

The Queen adds a note to the effect that Kitty Kears died in January 1865, which would make the old woman ninety-four at the time of her death.

On the first day of the new year 1858, the Prince wrote:—"The last year has again brought so much trouble with it that one is quite glad to leave it behind. The new year begins for us with the separation from a beloved daughter, which will be specially painful to me. I do not, however, let any hint of this be seen, and I rejoice for her in the prospect of a happy future.

"We have innumerable visitors, and to find room for them all in a very limited palace will be a real feat of dexterity. If I succeed in doing this, I may take a professional tour as a conjuror; for the countless bouquets from Herr Dobler's hat are not more remarkable than the princes without number in Buckingham Palace."

Sir Theodore Martin says—"Were it befitting to speak in detail of the domestic incidents of this busy month, a

picture of family love and devotion might be presented which would speak to the heart and imagination in no ordinary degree."

The Queen's diary lets us into a few of the secrets, and shows the loving interest, and the general excitement felt in the approaching first marriage of the family.

On the 15th of January there is this entry—"Went to look at the rooms prepared for Vicky's honeymoon. Very pretty. It quite agitated me to look at them. We took a short walk with Vicky, who was dreadfully upset at this real break in her life; the real separation from her childhood. She slept, for the last time, in the same room with Alice."

On the nineteenth—"Such a housefull; such bustle and excitement. Between eighty and ninety sat down to dinner at the royal table. After dinner a party, and very gay and pretty dance. It was very animated, all the princes dancing. Albert did not waltz. Ernest (Duke of Coburg) said it seemed like a dream to him, to see Vicky dance as a bride, just as I did eighteen years ago, and I still (so he said) looking very young. In 1840, poor dear papa (late Duke of Coburg) danced with me, as Ernest did with Vicky."

On "Vicky's last unmarried day," the Queen writes—"Dear Vicky gave me a brooch, before church, with her hair; and, clasping me in her arms, said, 'I hope to be worthy to be your child!' When the duties of hospitality for the day were over, we (the Queen and the Prince) accompanied Vicky to her room; kissed her, and gave her our blessing, and she was much overcome. I pressed her in my arms, and she clung to her truly adored papa with much tenderness."

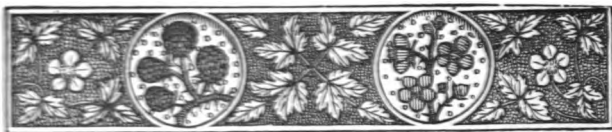
"Monday, 25th January.—The second most eventful day in my life as regards feelings. I felt as if I were being married over again myself, only much more nervous, for I had not that blessed feeling which I had then, which raises

and supports one, of giving myself up for life to him whom I loved and worshipped—then and ever! . . . Got up, and while dressing, dearest Vicky came to see me, looking well and composed, and in a fine, quiet, frame of mind. She had slept more soundly than before. This relieved me greatly. Gave her a pretty book called *The Bridal Offering*."

The marriage morning was very bright, and everything passed off well. The Queen and the Crown-Princess were Daguerreotyped together with the Prince; but the Queen says she trembled, so her likeness was very indistinct. The three sisters of the Princess were dressed in pink satin, trimmed with Newport lace; Alice with a wreath, and the two others with only bouquets of cornflower and marguerites in their hair; the four boys were in Highland dress, and the eight bridesmaids in white tulle, with wreaths and bouquets of pink roses and white heather. The Queen says, "Mamma was there, looking so handsome in violet velvet, trimmed with ermine, and white silk and violet." "Our darling Flower looked very touching and lovely, with such an innocent, confident, and serious expression, her veil hanging back over her shoulders, walking between her beloved father and dearest uncle Leopold, who had been at her christening and confirmation. My last fear of being overcome vanished on seeing Vicky's calm, quiet, and composed manner. It was beautiful to see her kneeling with Fritz, their hands joined, and the train borne by the eight young ladies, who looked like a cloud of maidens hovering round her, as they knelt near her. Dearest Albert took her by the hand to give her away—my beloved Albert (who, I saw, felt so strongly), which reminded me vividly of having, in the same way, proudly, tenderly, confidently, most lovingly, knelt by him on this very same spot, and having our hands joined there." The Queen adds, that when it was over she was so relieved, so overjoyed, that she could have embraced everybody.

After a very short honeymoon, Prince Frederick William took his bride to her future home. The parting was very hard work to them all. "I think it will kill me to take leave of dear papa," said the Princess to her mother. The Queen and the Prince went down to Gravesend, and there, as well as in London, the most enthusiastic loyalty was displayed by the people. Although the day was most cold and dreary, young girls with wreaths, in spite of the snow, walked on the pier strewing flowers. The Queen was very much overcome, and the Prince felt more than he cared to show. But the young bride was received with the greatest enthusiasm in the country of her adoption; and there were sent to her, from time to time, such fatherly letters from the Prince, as must not only have comforted her, but been sources of invaluable instruction to the young wife beginning her life in a new home and among strangers.





CHAPTER XVII.

In Love and Quietness.

“ And leave us rulers of your blood
As noble, till the latest day !
May children of our children say
She wrought her people lasting good.”

IT was not generally known that the Princess Royal was an artist ; but, indeed, several members of our royal family have shown that they possess considerable artistic skill—the Princess Victoria amongst them. When an art bazaar, in aid of the funds for the widows and orphans of the soldiers who fell in the Crimean war, was held, all who could sent contributions. The Princess Royal was asked if she would send a picture ; but she was exceedingly diffident in regard to her own powers, and was at first afraid to show her work. But she had painted the picture of a dead guardsman, with his widow weeping over his body in the battlefield ; and it was represented to her that this picture would be certain to excite considerable interest, that no doubt some one would like to purchase it, and that in any case many people would pay their shillings to go and see it ; and so the funds would

be augmented. The thought that she, by her work, could assist some poor widow, whose heart was nearly broken by sorrow, was such a joyful one to the Princess, that it quite overcame her reluctance and timidity ; and she said, that if the Queen did not object, she would gladly send her picture to the bazaar. The Queen willingly consented, and the picture was sent to the exhibition at Burlington House. The subject was very touching and pathetic, and appealed to the sympathies of all who looked, while their admiration was excited by the high character of its execution. The Princess had thought that she might dispose of the picture privately, and had put a very modest price upon it, which she intended to enter as her subscription. But the result surprised her greatly. Directly the doors of the exhibition were opened, some one offered eighty guineas for the picture by the Princess ; and this offer was immediately followed by another of a hundred guineas ; and this again by others. It was arranged that the highest offer up to a certain day at noon was to obtain the picture, and the names of those who wished for it were written in a book. At the appointed time, two hundred guineas had been offered, and the gentleman who made the highest bid said, just before the clock struck twelve, "I am surprised that there is not even more appreciation of so fine a work of art ; and that it may not be said that it sold for two hundred guineas, I offer two hundred and fifty ;" and while the clock was striking, he wrote a cheque for the amount, and became the gratified owner of the picture. But there was some one who was more gratified still, and that was the young Princess, whose skill and industry had enabled her to give so noble a subscription to the funds for the widows and orphans ; while pleasure quite as pure was felt by the royal father and mother of the young artist.

Prince Albert, himself a devoted lover of true art, had tried to imbue his children with a love of it also, and had

sought to make it serve its highest ends in regard to their education. He became possessed of a beautiful marble statuette of the boy king, Edward VI.; he had it placed conspicuously on the top of one of the grand staircases at Windsor, intending it for a present to the Prince of Wales on his coming of age. The statue shows the young king with a sceptre in his hand, so placed as to point to the representation of a Bible, which is opened at 2 Chron. xxxiv. 1, 2—“*Josiah was eight years old when he began to reign, and he reigned in Jerusalem one-and-thirty years. And he did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, and walked in the ways of David his father, and declined neither to the right hand nor to the left.*”

Into the private religious life of the Queen and her family it does not become us to enter, but we know enough to assure us that she is truly a Christian woman and a Christian ruler. Before the Great King she bows with reverence as lowly as that of the poorest of her subjects, and always as the guide of her life she has taken the Holy Bible. It was no passing fancy that influenced her answer to the embassy of the African Prince, who came over with costly presents, and asked in return that the Queen would tell him the secret of England's greatness and glory. The Queen believed what she said, when, forgetting her armies, her fleet, her merchandise and wealth, she handed the messenger a beautiful copy of the Bible, saying—“Tell the Prince that *this* is the secret of England's greatness.”

And, as far as she could, she has carried out its instructions in her life. When she visited the Great Exhibition in Paris there were two Sundays in the ten days spent in France. All who have been in that country know that the Sunday is set apart, not for religious worship, but for all spectacles and amusements. But our Queen and Prince Albert remained at the Palace of St. Cloud, and the chaplain of the English Embassy proceeded to the Palace

to conduct divine service. The next Sunday, which was the last of their stay, was spent in the same quiet, retired fashion.

The Princess Royal, although she was only young when she left home, did not lose the privilege of her father's counsels. She had not long been gone when he began to wonder how and when a visit to her in her new home could be brought about, and in the meantime he sent such letters as only a wise father could send to a beloved and sensible daughter. We give one as a specimen of the rest:—"Your festival time, if not your honeymoon, comes to an end to-day; and on this I take leave to congratulate you, unfeeling though it may sound, for I wish for you the necessary time and tranquillity to digest the many impressions you have received, and which otherwise, like a wild revel, first influence and then stupify, leaving a dull, nerveless lassitude behind. Your exertions, and the demands which have been made upon you, have been quite immense; you have done your best, and have won the hearts, or what is called the hearts, of all. In the nature of things we may now expect a little reaction. The public, just because it was rapturous and enthusiastic, will now become minutely critical, and take you to pieces anatomically. This is to be kept in view, although it need cause you no uneasiness, for you have only followed your natural bent, and have made no external demonstration which did not answer to the truth of your inner nature. It is only the men who present an artificial demeanour to the world who have to dread being unmasked.

"Your place is that of your husband's wife and your mother's daughter. You will desire nothing else, but you will also forego nothing of that which you owe to your husband and to your mother. Ultimately your mind will, from the over-excitement, fall back to a little lassitude and sadness. But this will make you feel a craving for activity, and you have much to do in studying your new country, its

tendencies, and its people, and in overlooking your household as a good housewife, with punctuality, method, and vigilant care. . . . Thus very quickly comes a change over the paternal home, and what it was of old it will never again be to you! What does not pass away, and is alone of value here below, is the old love and constancy of heart and mind. These you will always find awaiting you, come when you may, though, in truth, they have gone with you to your far-off home, and surround you there too. You are sure to succeed in bringing your life and thoughts into order, and in gaining the tranquillity that is essential for the health of your mind and soul."

Lord Derby's second Administration was formed early in that year. On the 10th of May the Queen and Prince Consort went to Birmingham, and were most loyally received. Early in August they were present at the opening of the Napoleon Dock, at Cherbourg. The Queen writes as they were returning—"Friday, 6th August—Affie's (Alfred's) fourteenth birthday. May God bless and protect this dear child. At twenty minutes to five we landed at our peaceful Osborne, leaving George and all but our own attendants to return to London. The evening was very warm and calm. Dear Affie was on the pier, and we found all the other children, including baby, standing at the door. 'Deckel' (a favourite dog) and our charming kennel-bred Dachs 'Boy' also received us with pleasure. We went to see Affie's table of birthday presents, entirely nautical. Albert was suffering with headache, the result of his speech. I joined him out on the lawn in an hour, and then went with the children—Alice and I driving—to the Swiss cottage, which was all decked out with flags in honour of Alfred's birthday. The children had lunched there. Alice, Affie, and Mr. Cowell were the additions to our dinner-party. I sat between Albert and Affie. The two little boys (Princes Arthur and Leopold) appeared. A band played, and after dinner we

danced with the three boys and three girls and the company a merry country-dance on the terrace. A delightful finale to our expedition! It seemed a dream that this morning at twelve we should have been still at Cherbourg, with the Emperor and Empress on board our yacht."

Early in August the Queen and the Prince went to Germany, to see their married daughter. The day of the meeting was made sad by the news that Prince Albert's valet for twenty-nine years had died. The Queen writes thus affectionately of him:—"He was the only link my beloved one had about him which connected him with his childhood, the only one with whom he could talk over old times. I cannot think of my dear husband without Cart. He seemed part of himself. We were so proud of, and thankful for, this faithful old servant, and now he is gone. A sad breakfast we had indeed. Albert felt the loss so much, and we had to choke our grief down all day."

The diary thus records their arrival:—"It became gradually dark, and the time seemed very long as we approached nearer what we had come for. One more stoppage at Brandenburg, and we arrived at the Wildpark Station. There on the platform stood our darling child, with a nosegay in her hand. She stepped in, and long and warm was the embrace as she clasped me in her arms. So much to tell, and to say, and to ask, yet so unaltered, looking well—quite the old Vicky still. It was a happy moment, for which I thank God." The visit was a very pleasant one. The royal visitors went to the garrison church at Potsdam on Sunday, and on Tuesday to a review. They visited Berlin, and were everywhere received with friendliness and demonstrations of affection. The Prince Consort's birthday came round while they were there; and the Queen writes—"I gave Albert the children's letters. They had all written. So sad to be separated from them to-day. . . . Down to the drawing-room to arrange the present-table,

and found Fritz and Louise (Princess of Baden) there. Vicky soon followed, and then we went up to Albert, where we found Ernest (Duke of Saxe-Coburg Gotha), who arrived this morning as a surprise. We took Albert down. My gifts were a picture of Beatrice, life-size, in oil, by Horsley—a complete collection of photographic views of Gotha and the country round—which particularly delighted Albert—and a paper-weight of Balmoral granite and deer's teeth, designed by Vicky. Vicky gave her portrait, a small oil one, by Hartmann, very like, though not flattered—an iron chair for the garden at Balmoral, and a drawing by herself."

When the visit was over, the Queen writes—"Our tears flowed fast, so did Vicky's, but our last words were—'To a speedy meeting again.' All would be comparatively easy, were it not for the one thought, that I cannot be with her at that very critical moment when every mother goes to her child."

When they landed at Dover, Prince Alfred met them "in his middies' jacket, cap, and dirk, half blushing, and looking very happy," and proud at having passed an excellent examination.

On their way to Balmoral for their summer holiday, the Queen and Prince went to Leeds, for the purpose of opening the noble town hall which had just been completed. Afterwards they rested for a night in Edinburgh, and went on to Balmoral; "and never were the deep calm of its forest solitudes, and the breath of heaven, fresh blown from its mountains, more welcome than after the excitement and stir, and tropical heat, of the scenes in which the last few weeks had been passed."

After a short holiday they were again engrossed in business. The Queen's Indian proclamation, in which she declared that, though she firmly relied herself on the truth of Christianity, and acknowledged with gratitude the solace

of religion, she would not impose her convictions on any of her subjects, aroused some interest and respect.

The Queen opened Parliament the following year (1859) in person, and shortly afterwards Lord Palmerston's second Administration took the place of that of Lord Derby. On the 15th of May, the Queen, the Prince Consort, the Princess Helena, and the Duke of Cambridge, went to visit the camp at Aldershot, and were most enthusiastically received. The Princess Royal came over to visit her parents, and not only enjoyed but was benefitted by the visit. The Prince's letters were continued after her return, in one of which he gives an amusing account of the little Princess Beatrice:—"The little aunt makes daily progress, and is really too comical. When she tumbles, she calls out in bewilderment, 'she don't like it! she don't like it!' and she came in to breakfast, a morning or two ago, moaning, 'Baby has been so naughty; poor baby, so naughty!'"

That year saw two public movements, which have since greatly benefitted the land. The Metropolitan Drinking Fountains Association was formed, under the auspices of the Baroness Burdett-Coutts and the Earl of Shaftesbury, and the first Handel Festival was held at the Crystal Palace.

That year the royal family visited the Channel Islands, and the Prince gave an address to the British Association, which was much valued.

The year 1860 opened with promises of peace and comparative plenty; and in that year our Queen became a grandmother. The Prince wrote to his daughter:—"Everything goes on most excellently, body and soul, mother and child! I hope you are very quiet; and keep this well in mind, that although you are well, and feel yourself well, the body has to take on a new conformation, and the nervous system a new life. . . . Only rest of brain, heart, and body, along with good nourishment, and its

assimilation by regular, undisturbed digestion, can restore the animal forces.

"The little girl must be a darling. Little girls are much prettier than boys. I advise her to model herself after her aunt Beatrice. That excellent lady has now not a moment to spare. 'I have no time,' she says, 'to do anything, I must write letters to my niece.'"

That year the Prince of Wales went to America; and was received with every demonstration of respect. In the autumn, the Queen and Prince were at Coburg, when rather an alarming accident happened to the Prince. He was crossing the railway about a mile from Coburg, when the horses took fright and ran away, going against the bar which was placed across, to prevent carriages from passing. Seeing that an accident was inevitable, the Prince sprang from the carriage, and was shaken and cut. He might have been much worse; but the Queen resolved to show her gratitude for the escape of her husband, and thus wrote to Sir Charles Phipps:—"The Queen feels so deeply impressed with gratitude to our heavenly Father in having guided her beloved husband to do what was the right thing, and in having watched over and protected him at this hour of peril, that she cannot rest without doing something to mark permanently her feelings. In times of old, a church or a monument would probably have been erected on the spot. What the Queen wishes to do is to be able to benefit her fellow-creatures; and her desire would be to found or add to some charity at Coburg (her dear husband's home), by adding a wing either to some school or hospital (of both of which they are much in want), which might bear the Queen's name. One thousand pounds, or even two, given either at once, or in instalments yearly, would not, in the Queen's opinion, be too much. She will not rest satisfied until she has done this."

In accordance with this wish of the Queen, a trust called

"The Victoria-Stift" was established, by which young men and women of good character, in the humbler classes, were helped with money for their apprenticeship, or other objects.

In December of that year, the Princess Alice was betrothed to Prince Louis of Hesse. The Queen thus writes of this interesting event:—"After dinner, while talking to the gentlemen, I perceived Alice and Louis talking before the fire-place more earnestly than usual, and when I passed to go to the other room, both came up to me, and Alice, in much agitation, said he had proposed to her, and he begged for my blessing. I could only squeeze his hand and say 'Certainly,' and that we would see him in our room later. Got through the evening, working as well as we could. Alice came to our room . . . agitated, but quiet. . . . Albert sent for Louis to his room; and then called Alice and me in. . . . Louis has a warm, noble heart. We embraced our dear Alice, and praised her much to him. After talking a little, we parted; a most touching, and, to me, most sacred moment."





CHAPTER XVIII.

The Year of Trouble.

“ For that he loved our Queen,
And, for her sake, the people of her love,
Few and far distant names shall rank above
His own, where England's cherished names are seen ”

“ **T**O-MORROW our marriage will be twenty-one years old! How many a storm has swept over it, and still it continues green and fresh, and throws out vigorous roots, from which I can, with gratitude to God, acknowledge that much good will yet be engendered for the world! It is now with these twenty-one years as with the fourscore years of the Bible (Luther's version)—if they have been delicious, yet they have been labour and trouble.” So wrote the Prince to his old friend Baron Stockmar, on the 9th of February 1862. The Queen wrote to her uncle, King Leopold—“ Very few can say with me, that their husband, at the end of twenty-one years, is not only full of the friendship, kindness, and affection which a truly happy marriage brings with it, but of the same tender love

as in the very first days of our marriage ! We missed dear mamma and three of our children, but had six dear ones round us, and assembled in the evening those of our household still remaining who were with us then."

There was one living then of whom both the Queen and Prince thought tenderly on this day of happy memories, little guessing that, in rather more than a month, she would have passed away. The Prince wrote the following affectionate letter to the Duchess of Kent:—"Buckingham Palace, 10th February 1861.—I cannot let this day go by without writing to you, even if I had not to thank you for your kind wishes and the charming photographs. Twenty-one years make a good long while, and to-day our marriage 'comes of age, according to law.' We have faithfully kept our pledge for better and for worse, and have only to thank God that He has vouchsafed so much happiness to us. May He have us in His keeping for the days to come ! You have, I trust, found good and loving children in us, and we have experienced nothing but love and kindness from you. In the hope that your pains and aches will now leave you soon,—I remain, as ever, your affectionate son, ALBERT."

A few days later the Duchess went to Buckingham Palace on a short visit. She was in very delicate health, and suffered much pain from an abscess, which caused the right arm to be greatly swollen, and quite prevented the use of the hand or arm. But her visit seemed to do her good ; and the Queen and Prince went to Osborne, feeling not particularly anxious about her. On the 12th of March, having returned, they visited her at Frogmore, and found her weak and ill, having undergone a surgical operation in the arm ; but there were no symptoms to create alarm. On the fifteenth, the Queen and Prince went to inspect the gardens of the Royal Horticultural Society at South Kensington ; and afterwards, feeling at rest respecting her

mother, and satisfied with the day's work, the Queen was "resting, quite happy, in her arm-chair," when the Prince came in to say they ought to go to Frogmore, as the Duchess of Kent had been seized with a shivering fit, which her physician, Sir James Clark, regarded as a very serious symptom. The Queen started at once by train for Windsor, accompanied by the Prince and the Princess Alice. The Queen thought the way had never seemed so long; but by eight o'clock they reached Frogmore. The Duchess was seated on a sofa, supported by cushions. "The end will be easy," said one of the attendants to the Queen, who then realised the fact that the life so dear to her was passing away. "Is there no hope?" she asked, and the reply was a mournful confirmation of her fears. It was a great grief to her Majesty that her mother had lost consciousness, and did not know her daughter. For the first time in her life, those tender demonstrations of affection, which had always been received with gladness, were disregarded, and awakened no response. "I remained kneeling or standing by that beloved parent, whom it seemed too awful to see hopelessly leaving me. She brushed my hand off, and the dreadful reality was before me, that, for the first time, she did not know the child she had ever received with such tender smiles."

The night wore away, the Queen watching by her beloved mother until overcome with grief, then, vainly seeking rest, returning to her side until the morning came, and it was evident that the end was very near. About eight o'clock, "the dear face grew paler, the features longer and sharper, the breathing more easy," and then the breathing ceased, and all was over. "Convulsed with sobs, I covered the hand with kisses. Albert lifted me up and took me into the next room, himself entirely melted into tears, which is unusual for him, deep as his feelings are, and clasped me in his arms. I went into the room again after a few minutes, and gave one

look. My darling mother was sitting as she had done before, but was already white. O God! how awful! how mysterious! But what a blessed end! Her gentle spirit at rest, her sufferings over! But I—I, wretched child, who had lost the mother I so tenderly loved, from whom, for these forty-one years, I had never been parted except for a few weeks, what was my case? My childhood—everything seemed to come upon me at once. I seemed to have lived through a life—to have become old. What I had dreaded, and fought off the idea of for years, had come and must be borne. The blessed future meeting, and *her* peace and rest, must henceforward be my comfort.”

It fell to the lot of the Queen to communicate the sad news to her sister the Princess Hohenlohe, to King Leopold, and to the Princess Royal. The latter hastened home to be with her mother in her time of sorrow; and the Queen speaks of the great comfort she found in “dear good Alice.”

By the will of the Duchess the Queen was to become possessed of all her property, and the Prince was to be sole executor. This greatly increased the labours of the Prince, who had to examine her papers and correspondence, and to adjust the claims of kinsfolk and retainers. Throughout the country deep and general sympathy was felt for the Queen in her bereavement, and the greatest respect for the life and character of the Duchess of Kent was manifest. People's thoughts turned to those days when she, left a widow in a strange land, had thrown upon her the responsibility of training the child, then only eight months old, who was the probable future Sovereign of England. How well she had discharged her duty the results proved. Both Houses of Parliament voted addresses of condolence to the Queen; and everywhere evidences of respectful sympathy were manifest. The old lady who had passed away in her seventy-seventh year had lived a long and useful life.

After the funeral service at St. George's Chapel (where the body was deposited until a mausoleum could be completed at Frogmore), our Queen and her family went to
* Osborne for a time of quiet and retirement. The Prince of Wales had returned from Canada, and was about to learn the duties of a regimental officer, and to pursue his studies in constitutional law at Cambridge. "We have good news of Alfred," wrote the Prince, "from Montserrat, St. Christopher, and Nevis. Yesterday we celebrated little Beatrice's fourth birthday. The old woman in the children's Swiss cottage celebrated her eighty-fourth, which greatly interested the little one."

On the 4th of May the Queen announced the intended marriage of her daughter Alice with the Prince of Hesse-Darmstadt; and the House of Commons voted a dowry of £30,000, and an annuity of £6000. On the 14th of May the Prince visited his son, the Prince of Wales, at Cambridge, in order to judge for himself of the progress he was making. The Queen's birthday was kept very quietly that year; and the happiness of the stay at Osborne was rather marred by the illness of Prince Louis, from an attack of measles, and the longer and more serious indisposition of Prince Leopold, who caught them from him.

June was a busy month with the Prince, who had much to do for the Queen and the country. The civil war in America, which was to produce such misery and last so long, had broken out; and he foresaw the distress which would come to Lancashire when the supply of cotton failed, and sought beforehand to think of some measures of relief. He was not well during the time. "Am ill, feverish, with pains in my limbs, and feel very miserable," he wrote, but little notice was taken of this. In August, the Queen, Prince Albert, and Prince Alfred (who had returned from his cruise to the West Indies), the Princesses Alice and Helena, went to Ireland. The Prince of Wales was there,

serving in the camp at the Curragh of Kildare. The Queen wrote—"Captain Percy commands the Guards, and Bertie is placed immediately under him. I thanked him for treating Bertie as he did, just like any other officer; for I know he keeps him up to his work, in a way, as General Bruce told me, no one else has done, and yet Bertie likes him very much."

The Prince Consort passed his last birthday in Ireland. It was well for all the family that they did not know it to be the last. The Queen wrote—"This is the dearest of days, and one which fills my heart with love, and gratitude, and emotion. God bless and protect for ever my beloved Albert, the best and purest of human beings." The day was kept quietly—they all regretted the absence of the little ones—"above all, baby," and the kindly greeting of the mother, which would never more be given to them. They went to Killarney, and greatly enjoyed the scenery. The Prince wrote—"In Ireland we met with a very cordial reception, and admired immensely the country round the Lakes of Killarney. The Prince of Wales has acquitted himself extremely well in the camp."

From Ireland they went to Balmoral, where they had good weather and a time of great happiness. As usual, the Prince derived much pleasure from his favourite recreation of deer-stalking, and on one day succeeded in bringing down three stags. The Queen, too, was able to a great extent to lay aside her sorrow for her mother's death, and enjoy the scenery and the air. We give an extract from her diary, describing the last outing which they all had together:—"Wednesday, 16th October 1861.—To our great satisfaction, it was a most beautiful morning. Not a cloud was on the bright blue sky, and it was perfectly calm. There had been a sharp frost, which lay on parts of the grass, and the mountains were beautifully lit up with those very blue shades upon them like the bloom on a plum. Up early and break-

fasted with Alice, Louis, and Lenchen, in our room. At twenty minutes to nine o'clock we started, with Alice, Lenchen, and Louis. The morning was beyond everything splendid, and the country in such beauty, though the poor trees are nearly leafless. . . . We sat on a very precipitous place, which made one dread anyone's moving backwards; and here, at a little before two o'clock, we lunched. The light was charmingly soft, and, as I said before, like the bloom on a plum. The luncheon was very acceptable, for the air was extremely keen, and we found ice thicker than a shilling on the top of *Cairn Turc*, which did not melt when Brown took it and kept it in his hand. Helena was so delighted, for this was the only really great expedition in which she had accompanied us. Duncan and the keeper at Loch Callater (R. Stewart) went with us as guides. I made some hasty sketches; and then Albert wrote on a bit of paper that we had lunched here, put it into the Seltzer-water bottle, and buried it there, or rather, stuck it into the ground. Grant had done the same when we visited *Ben Muich Dhui* the first time. This over, we walked part of the way back, which we had ridden to avoid the bogs—we ladies walking only a short way, and then riding. We altered our course, and left *Cairn Glaishie* to our right, and went in the direction of the *Cairn Wall*. Looking back on the distant hills above *Glen Isla* and *Cairn Lochan* (Lord Airlie's 'country'), it was even more beautiful; for, as the day advanced, the mountains became clearer and clearer, of a lovely blue, while the valleys were in shadow. *Schihallion*, and those further ranges, were also most perfectly to be seen, and gave me such a longing for further Highland expeditions. We went over *Garbehory*, looking down on the road to the *Spittal*, and on the lower mountains, which are most curiously connected one with another, and which, from the height we were, we could look down upon. . . . This gave me a very good idea of the geography of the

country, which delighted dear Albert, as this expedition was quite in a different direction from any that we had ever made before. But my head is so very ungeographical that I cannot describe it. We came down by the *Month Eigie*, a steep hill covered with grass, down part of which I rode, walking where it was steepest; but it was so wet and slippery that I had two falls. We got down to the road to the *Spittal Bridge*, about fifteen miles from Castleton, at nearly half-past four, and then down along the new road, at least that part of it which is finished, and which is to extend to the *Cairn Wall*. We went back on our side of the river; and if we had been a little earlier, Albert might have got a stag, but it was too late. The moon rose and shone most beautifully, and we returned at twenty minutes to seven o'clock, much pleased and interested with this delightful expedition. Alas! I fear our *last* great one!"

To this the Queen adds, on the publication of her book in 1867, "*It was our last one!*"

They were at Windsor Castle in October; and on the 9th November the Queen wrote—"This was our dear Bertie's twentieth birthday. I pray God to assist our efforts to make him turn out well." A few days later the Queen began to feel great uneasiness on account of the failing health of her husband. There was some family trouble at the time;—the King of Portugal had died of fever, and the Princess Royal was unwell—and these things, added to the pressure of work upon the Prince, told upon his never-robust health. The Queen wrote to the Prince's secretary, begging that his work might be made as light as possible. On the 19th of November the Prince wrote almost his last letter to his beloved daughter, the Crown Princess, on her twenty-first birthday. "May your life, which has begun beautifully, expand still further to the good of others and the contentment of your own mind! True inward happiness is to be sought only in the internal consciousness of

effort systematically directed to good and useful ends. Success, indeed, depends upon the blessing which the Most High sees meet to vouchsafe to our endeavours. May this success not fail you, and may your outward life leave you unhurt by the storms to which the sad heart so often looks forward with a shrinking dread."

He seems himself to have had a presentiment that the end of his own life was not far off. In the course of a conversation with the Queen, he said—"I do not cling to life; you do, but I set no store by it. If I knew that those I love were well cared for, I should be quite ready to die to-morrow." In the same conversation he said—"I am sure, if I had a severe illness, I should give up at once. I should not struggle for life."

On the twenty-second he went to Sandhurst, to inspect the buildings for the new Staff College and Royal Military Hospital. It was a day of incessant rain, and there is no doubt that the fatigue and exposure were most injurious to him. On the following Sunday he wrote—"Am full of rheumatic pains, and feel thoroughly unwell. Have scarcely closed my eyes at night for the last fortnight." He got no better during the following week—a week of great excitement concerning the "*Trent*" affair. The *Trent* was an English steamer which sailed from America, having on board Messrs. Mason and Slidell, envoys accredited by the Confederate States, Mr. Mason to the English and Mr. Slidell to the French Court. An American ship fired into the *Trent*, which was immediately boarded by Captain Wilkes and a guard of marines, who proceeded to arrest the two envoys. The affair caused great irritation among the English people, who considered it an outrage on the British flag. One of the last services which the Prince rendered to this country was to write a memorandum containing suggestions for the despatches which were to be sent from our Government to the United States,

which suggestions were so valuable that the Ministers gladly adopted them.

On Sunday, the 1st of December, he went to chapel with the rest of his family, but looked very ill. The next day Dr. Jenner was sent for, and continued in attendance until the end. No danger was apprehended, but his appetite failed, and he was troubled with great restlessness. On the fifth it was hoped that he was a little better; he took a little nourishment with some relish, and listened to the Princess Alice, who read to him. "I found my Albert," writes her Majesty, "most dear and affectionate, and quite himself when I went in with little Beatrice, whom he kissed. He quite laughed at some of her new French verses, which I made her repeat; then he held her little hand in his for some time, and she stood looking at him. He then soon dozed off, having done so a good deal through the day, and I left, not to disturb him."

But there was no change for the better, and it became necessary to let the outside world know that the Prince was ill. Very guarded information only was vouchsafed, and but a few people knew that there was danger. Those who did were in the greatest anxiety. Several guests had been invited, but the invitations were countermanded. The papers spoke of the illness at first as a feverish cold, then of increased feverish symptoms, and of an illness likely to continue for some time; but the doctors knew that there were signs of gastric or low fever. Dr. Jenner broke the intelligence to the Queen, telling her in the kindest, clearest manner, that the fever must have its course, but there were no bad symptoms. The Prince was not to know that it was fever, as he had a horror of it; and it was hoped that everything was going on well.

But, naturally, the Queen was feeling the most intense sorrow and anxiety. She had many demands made upon her by the State, which now she must meet alone, in which,

usually, she would have had her husband's help, and now she was almost worn out with watching and work. Some of the entries in her diary are most pitiful. "He was so kind, calling me *gutes Weibchen* (good little wife), and liking me to hold his dear hand. Oh, it is an anxious, anxious time, but God will help us through it." "Another good night, for which I thank God. I went over at eight and found Albert taking his beef tea. I supported him, and he laid his dear head (his beautiful face, more beautiful than ever, has grown so thin) on my shoulder, and remained a little while saying, 'It is very comfortable so, dear child,' which made me so happy." As she assisted him from his bed to the sofa, he paused to look at his favourite picture, saying, "It helps me through half the day."

The picture was a copy, on porcelain, of the Madonna and Child, by Raphael.

The Prince himself was very calm, and waited quietly for the end. At the commencement of his illness one of his physicians said, "Your royal highness will be better in a few days;" but he replied, "No, I shall not recover, but I am not taken by surprise. I am not afraid. I trust I am prepared."

It was a little remarkable that the last sermon he heard at Balmoral was from the text, "Prepare to meet thy God." It was preached by the Rev. Mr. Stewart, of St. Andrews, Edinburgh, and the Prince was so struck by it that he asked afterwards to be allowed to read the manuscript.

The Queen several times in her diary refers to "dear good Alice," and the comfort and support which she proved. The Princess, indeed, developed marvellous powers of self-control and devotion. She was with her father constantly, and the way in which she rose to meet the emergency is thus described in a letter which we take from *England's Royal Home*, by the Rev. Charles Bullock, B.D., and which letter was written by a member of the Queen's household:—

"The last Sunday that the Prince passed on earth was a very blessed one for the Princess Alice to look back upon. He was very ill and very weak, and she spent the afternoon alone with him, while the others were in church. He begged to have his sofa drawn to the window, that he might see the sky and the clouds sailing past. He then asked her to play to him, and she went through several of his favourite hymns and chorales. After she had played some time, she looked round and saw him lying back, his hands folded as if in prayer, and his eyes shut. He lay so long without moving that she thought he had fallen asleep. Presently he looked up and smiled. She said, 'Were you asleep, dear papa?' 'Oh no,' he answered, 'only I have such sweet thoughts.'

"During his illness his hands were often folded in prayer; and when he did not speak, his serene face showed that the 'happy thoughts' were with him to the end.

"The Princess Alice's fortitude amazed us all. She saw from the first that both her father's and her mother's firmness depended on her firmness, and she set herself to the duty. He loved to speak openly of his condition, and had many wishes to express. He loved to hear hymns and prayers. He could not speak to the Queen of himself, for she could not bear to listen, and shut her eyes to the danger. His daughter saw that she must act differently, and she never let her voice falter or shed a single tear in his presence. She sat by him, listened to all he said, repeated hymns, and then, when she could bear it no longer, walked calmly to the door, and then rushed away to her room, returning again with the same calm and pale face, without any appearance of the agitation she had gone through."

She it was whose quiet calmness strengthened her mother as well as her father. It seemed, indeed, that even then she was preparing for the future, though no one could guess that she would be the first of her family to join the beloved

one, now passing away, in the better home. The Prince had asked to have some music. "I should like to hear a fine chorale played at a distance," he said ; and a piano was taken into the next room, and the Princess Alice played—

"To Thee, O Lord, I yield my spirit,
Who break'st, in love, this mortal chain ;
My life I but from Thee inherit,
And death becomes my chiefest gain.
In Thee I live, to Thee I die
Content, for Thou art ever nigh."

There was another old hymn, too, for which the Prince frequently asked, and which his daughter sang to him—a hymn which has comforted many other dying Christians—

"Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in Thee."

It was not until the day before his death that the public knew that the Prince's life was in danger. Then a bulletin declared that he had passed a restless night, and the symptoms had assumed an unfavourable character during the day. On the following morning, when the Queen went into the room, she records pathetically that her darling was "gazing, as it were, on unseen objects, and not taking notice of me." "The day was very fine, and very bright. I asked whether I might go out for a breath of air. The doctors answered, 'Yes, just for a quarter of an hour.' At about twelve I went out on the terrace with Alice. The military band was playing at a distance, and I burst into tears, and came home again. I hurried over at once. Dr. Watson was in the room. I asked him whether Albert was not better, as he seemed stronger, though he took very little notice, and he answered, 'We are very much frightened, but don't and won't give up hope.' They would not let Albert sit up to take his nourishment, as he wasted his strength by doing so. 'The pulse keeps up,' they said ; 'it is not worse.' Every hour, every minute, was a gain ;

and Sir James Clark was very hopeful—he had seen much worse cases. But the breathing was the alarming thing, it was so rapid. There was what they call a dusky hue about his face and hands, which I knew was not good. I made some observation about it to Dr. Jenner, and was alarmed by seeing he seemed to notice it. Albert folded his arms, and began arranging his hair, just as he used to do when well, and he was dressing. These were said to be bad signs. Strange! as though he were preparing for another and greater journey.”

And so, indeed, he was. He had not gone so far along the paths of this world as his friends could have wished, but he was now starting to go through the dim, mysterious path that leads to the gate of life.

So the day wore on to night, and there was no great change. The Prince of Wales had been hastily summoned from Cambridge, and six of the royal children, besides the Duke of Cambridge and other gentlemen connected with the Court, were present. The Queen knelt by his side, and bore her terrible trouble as best she could; and silent prayers of agony went up to God from that hushed chamber of mourning. “The castle clock chimed the third quarter after ten,” writes Sir Theodore Martin. “Calm and peaceful grew the beloved form; the features settled into the beauty of a perfectly serene repose; two or three long but gentle breaths were drawn, and that great soul had fled, to seek a nobler scope for its aspirations in the world within the veil, for which it had often yearned, where there is rest for the weary, and where the spirits of the just are made perfect.”

Shortly after midnight the great bell of St. Paul’s, which only tolls upon the death of some member of the royal family, startled the hushed city of London, and bore to thousands of sorrowful hearts the sad tidings that our Queen was a widow. Early on Sunday morning the people

were astir, and talked in consternation of the terrible event. Every one spoke of the Queen. "What will she do? How will she bear it? God pity her! God have mercy upon her!"

The morning services were filled with people who prayed for her, and when in the churches a solemn pause took the place of the prayer for the Prince Consort, a thrill of pity and sorrow went through the hearts of many; while in the chapels the prayers of the ministers for the Queen found a hearty response. Many a dinner was untasted that day, and all classes seemed to forget their own affairs in their sorrow for her Majesty.

The funeral took place on the 23d December, at Frogmore. The Prince of Wales was chief mourner, and the royal children and officers of state were filled with grief. A favourite chorale of the Prince was sung at his grave:—

"I shall not in the grave remain,
Since Thou death's bond hast severed;
But hope with Thee to rise again,
From fear of death delivered.
I'll come to Thee, where'er Thou art—
Live with Thee, from Thee never part;
Therefore to die is rapture.

And so to Jesus Christ I'll go,
My longing and extending;
So fall asleep in slumbering deep—
Slumber that knows no ending—
Till Jesus Christ, God's only Son,
Open the gates of bliss—leads on
To heaven—to life eternal!"

The following words were inscribed on the coffin:—
"Here lies the most illustrious and exalted Albert, Prince Consort, Duke of Saxony, Prince of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha, Knight of the Most Noble Order of the Garter, the most beloved husband of the most august and potent Queen Victoria.

"He died on the 14th day of December 1861, in the forty-third year of his age."

The Queen "declared to her family, that though she felt crushed by the loss of one who had been her companion through life, she knew how much was expected of her, and she accordingly called on her children to give her their assistance, in order that she might do her duty to them and the country," an appeal which met with a very loving response.

To some one who offered condolence to her Majesty, she replied, "I suppose I must not fret too much, for many poor women have to go through the same trial."

One thing that comforted her woman's heart was the universal esteem in which the Prince had evidently been held. All the world united to do him honour. Especially was he revered for all that he had been to the Queen, to whom he had turned his last look, and for whom he had lived. England, which did not know him at first, had come to love him dearly. Sadder Christmas has never dawned than that which followed his death, and all festivities were omitted, for every one thought of the shadow hanging over that hearth which he had made so bright. The nation became a family, and tears fell for the loss of one who had been as a personal friend.

It often happens that we do not really understand our friends until they are taken from us. There was a cartoon in one of the comic papers, which was in the press when the Prince died, and came out immediately after, which never would have been published had there been any idea that the subject of it was sick unto death. It excited disgust and anger in a thousand hearts; but it showed how little the real man was known. Some people seemed to wake from a dream of suspicion and mistrust to the fact that a most beautiful spirit had departed; and every one was eager and anxious to do justice to his memory. This world is the poorer when such a man dies; but there is another—"and

the kings of the earth do bring their glory into it." The other home must have allured the Queen upward since the death of her husband, and when she herself lays down the burden of life (God grant that it may be very long) she will find it made more home-like by the dear ones who are there.

The testimonies to the value of Prince Albert's character would fill a volume ; but there is one with which we take the liberty to enrich our pages—the noble *Dedication* of Alfred Tennyson, poet laureate, in his *Idylls of the King*.

"These to his Memory—since he held them dear,
Perchance as finding there unconsciously
Some image of himself—I dedicate,
I dedicate, I consecrate with tears
These Idylls.

And indeed he seems to me
Scarce other than my own ideal knight,
'Who revered his conscience as his king ;
Whose glory was redressing human wrong ;
Who spake no slander, no, nor listen'd to it ;
Who loved one only, and who clave to her—'
Her—over all whose realms, to their last isle,
Commingled with the gloom of imminent war,
The shadow of his loss drew like eclipse,
Darkening the world. We have lost him : he is gone :
We know him now : all narrow jealousies
Are silent ; and we see him as he moved,
How modest, kindly, all-accomplished, wise,
With what sublime repression of himself,
And in what limits, and how tenderly ;
Not swaying to this faction or to that ;
Nor making his high place the lawless perch
Of wing'd ambitions, nor a vantage ground
For pleasure ; but thro' all this tract of years
Wearing the white flower of a blameless life,
Before a thousand peering littlenesses,
In that fierce light which beats upon a throne,
And blackens every blot : for where is he
Who dares foreshadow for an only son



· ALBERT, PRINCE CONSORT.

A lovelier life, a more unstained, than his !
Or how should England, dreaming of *his* sons,
Hope more for these than some inheritance
Of such a life, a heart, a mind as thine.
Thou noble Father of her Kings to be,
Laborious for her people and her poor—
Voice in the rich dawn of an ampler day—
Far-sighted summoner of war and waste
To fruitful strifes and rivalries of peace—
Sweet nature gilded by the gracious gleam
Of letters, dear to Science, dear to Art,
Dear to thy land and ours, a Prince indeed
Beyond all titles, and a household name
Hereafter thro' all times, Albert the Good.

Break not, O woman's heart, but still endure ;
Break not, for thou art royal, but endure,
Remembering all the beauty of that star
Which shone so close beside thee, that ye made
One light together, but has past, and leaves
The crown a lonely splendour.

May all love,
His love, unseen but felt, o'ershadow thee,
The love of all thy sons encompass thee,
The love of all thy daughters cherish thee,
The love of all thy people comfort thee,
Till God's love set thee at his side again."





CHAPTER XIX.

Widowhood.

“For children wake, though fathers sleep
With a stone at foot and at head ;
Oh, sleepless God, for ever keep—
Keep both living and dead.”

THE Queen spent the greater part of the next year after her bereavement in retirement. Respectful demonstrations of loyalty and sympathy were abundant on every hand, for all the nation may be said to have been attired in mourning, and a cloud hung over the land. There were indeed plenty of reasons for quietness and sorrow. The year had scarcely begun, when a fearful accident occurred at the Hartley Colliery, near Newcastle-on-Tyne. Everything appeared to be going well, and the men were at work as usual on 16th January, when an immense iron beam, connected with the pumping apparatus, broke, and there was a terrible crash, the whole of the stages, props, gearing, and everything between the mouth of the pit and the bottom gave way, and the two hundred and five men who were in

the colliery were buried. There followed scenes of heart-rending excitement and misery. Women hurried to the pit, and men and boys began to work with all their power, day and night, to effect the rescue of the men below. They continued to work a whole week, sometimes being encouraged by sounds which came to them from below; but they were not able to reach the men until all were dead. When at last, on the twenty-second, an entrance was effected into the pit, it seemed that the men had spent their last days in calm preparation for death. Memorandums of what had taken place were found, and messages to friends and relatives scratched on flasks, boxes, and anything else upon which it had been possible to write. The men had sung and prayed together—the hymn “Rock of Ages, cleft for me,” which comforted their Prince, had also expressed the longings of the miners who so soon followed him—and then they had quietly laid themselves down in rows to die. The grief of their wives and children was fearful; and their sorrow was accelerated by the fact that they were the bread-winners of the families who had died, and the poor bereaved mourners saw nothing before them but starvation. The Queen sent the following message to the sufferers:—

“Her Majesty’s tenderest sympathy is with the poor widows and mothers, and her own misery only makes her feel the more for them. Her Majesty hopes that everything will be done, as far as possible, to alleviate their distress, and her Majesty will have the sad satisfaction in assisting in such a measure.”

The good example thus set was followed by many others; and a subscription was set on foot, which ultimately reached £81,000, for the relief of the sufferers.

Nor might the benevolence of the British people stop here! The year 1862 was memorable as the year of the Cotton Famine. The war which was then going on in

America had caused the failure of the supply of cotton ; and there followed such a season of distress in Lancashire and Oheshire as can scarcely be described. Mills were stopped, and many thousands of men, women, and children were thrown out of employ. At first, those who had saved part of their earnings lived on their savings ; next, they sold every article they could spare from their houses ; and at last they had to throw themselves on their parishes for relief. At one time, four hundred thousand names were on the guardians' books, and the workhouses were full to overflowing. A bill was passed through Parliament, which enabled every parish overburdened by local distress to claim a contribution from the common fund of the Union ; the Unions, when they had to pay sums larger than they could raise, without pressing too severely on the ratepayers, were authorised to apply to other Unions in the same county to assist them, and to contract loans secured by the poor rates. "Rates-in-aid" were also to be levied, when the expenditure of the parish exceeded three shillings in the pound. Subscriptions were opened early in the year ; one under the management of the Lord Mayor of London and a committee, which met at the Mansion House ; and a second, under a central committee, presided over by the Earl of Derby, whose labours for the relief of the distressed were indefatigable. The amount sent to the central committee, before the year closed, was £407,830 ; and the Lord Mayor's fund amounted to £236,926. Some pitiful scenes were witnessed by those whose glad duty it was to distribute these noble funds. The committee decided not to give money where there were articles that might be sold or pawned. One gentleman discovered that a young man had a beautifully bound copy of *The Pilgrim's Progress*, which he had bought by instalments, and kept hidden away until the last. He could hide it no longer, but had to confess with tears that he possessed and must part with it.

The gentleman kindly took care of the book until better times came, and then returned it. An effort was made to procure cotton from India and other markets, by a Cotton-Supply Association, which was formed in Manchester. When some cotton was brought into one of the towns, the people went to meet it, and drew it through the streets in triumphant gladness. Some of the women kissed the cotton, and called it their saviour from starvation; and the excitement grew so strong, that at last one clear voice began singing.

“Praise God from whom all blessings flow,”

and all the voices took it up, sobs mingling with the music. The trouble was not without its blessings. There was universal sympathy felt for the Lancashire folk, and not a Sunday-school or a family failed to send a contribution; and there has ever since been a great deal of thrift among the working classes.

It was in 1862 that George Peabody made his munificent gift of £100,000 to the poor of London. He was a native of Danvers, in Massachusetts. He opened a small bank in London, which eventually became a very important one, and Peabody realised a large fortune. He placed the above sum—to which he afterwards added £250,000 more—in the hands of trustees, the Earl of Derby being chairman, and directed the money to be employed “to ameliorate the condition and augment the comforts of the poor, who, either by birth or established residence, form a recognised portion of the population of London.” There was to be a rigid exclusion from the management of the fund of any influences calculated to impart to it a character either sectarian as regards religion, or exclusive in relation to local or party politics. The Queen was so gratified by this beneficence that she wished to create him a baronet or Knight of the Bath, but as he was a Republican he could

not accept the honour. She therefore sent him her portrait and an autograph letter, in which she told him "how deeply she appreciated the noble act of more than princely munificence, by which he had sought to relieve the wants of the poorer class of her subjects residing in London." The generous banker replied "that he had been actuated by a deep sense of gratitude to God, who had blessed him with prosperity, and attachment to this great country, where, under her Majesty's benign rule, he had received so much personal kindness and enjoyed so many years of happiness."

The second International Exhibition was held in the summer of 1862. The Prince Consort had been busy during the last year of his life in making preparations for it. It was shorn of much of its interest on account of his death; but it contained a large and attractive collection of articles, especially from our own colonies.

On the 15th of March the Queen laid the first stone of the mausoleum in Frogmore Park, to which the remains of the Prince Consort were to be removed from their temporary resting-place. She had herself gone mournfully one morning, leaning on the arm of her daughter Alice, now her greatest comfort, to select the spot. On the 18th of December it was completed; and in the presence of the Prince of Wales, Prince Arthur, Prince Leopold, and Prince Louis of Hesse, the coffin was placed in its permanent tomb. A cairn was also raised at Balmoral, and a tablet on the front bears the inscription—"To the beloved Memory of Albert, the great and good Prince Consort; erected by his broken-hearted widow, Victoria R."

While she was suffering from her loss, when she first went to Scotland after the death of the Prince Consort, she requested that Dr. Macleod would be in attendance. He was a man who knew how to rise to the important position which was thus assigned him; and he thus writes of his feelings and experiences:—

"I am never tempted to conceal any conviction from the Queen, for I feel she sympathises with what is true, and likes the speaker to utter the truth exactly as he believes it. . . . All has passed well, that is to say, God enabled me to speak in private and in public to the Queen, in such a way as seemed to me to be truth, the truth in God's sight, that which I believe she needed, though I feel it would be very trying to her spirit to receive it. And what fills me with deepest thanksgiving is, that she has received it, and written to me such a kind, tender letter of thanks for it, which shall be treasured in my heart while I live.

"After dinner I was summoned unexpectedly to the Queen's room. She was alone. She met me, and, with an unutterably sad expression, which filled my eyes with tears, at once began to speak about the Prince. It is impossible for me to recall distinctly the sequence or substance of that long conversation. She spoke of his excellences, his love, his cheerfulness, how he was everything to her. She said she never shut her eyes to trials, but liked to look them in the face; how she would never shrink from duty, but that all was at present done mechanically; that her highest ideas of purity and love were obtained from him, and that God could not be displeased with her love. But there was nothing morbid in her grief. I spoke freely to her about all I felt regarding him—the love of the nation and their sympathy—and took every opportunity of bringing before her the reality of God's love and sympathy, her noble calling as a Queen, the value of her life to the nation, the blessedness of prayer."

The Queen tried to soothe her own sorrow by mitigating the sorrows of others. In Balmoral she frequently visited the sick and the dying. It was a beautiful picture that was made by the Queen, dressed in deep mourning, sitting with her Bible in her hands, reading to an old man whose life was passing away. She delighted to perform such services for

the poor. An old widow's cottage was often graced by her presence, and she rejoiced to carry, in her own arms, parcels of warm material, to increase the comforts of the afflicted.

On one occasion her Majesty went to Netley Hospital, to see the sick and wounded there. Seven years before, in company with the Prince Consort, she had laid the first stone. When she proposed to go, after her trouble, every one was glad, and the visit seemed to bring some consolation to her own heart. She passed through the wards, looking with kindness at the men, taking the greatest interest in their comfort, and speaking gentle words to them. One old man, who had served in India, and who was dying, said to her, "I thank God that He has allowed me to live long enough to see your Majesty with my own eyes." Both the Queen and the Princess Alice were deeply affected. The appearance of her Majesty during this visit is described as deeply interesting. "Her face bore the marks of a heartfelt and abiding sorrow. Her smile was, however, as gracious as ever, and her voice, though low and very gentle, had all its old sweetness and clearness."

Affliction and death always move the heart of the Queen to pity. After the death of President Lincoln she wrote a long letter to his widow, which her son described as "the outgushing of a woman's heartfelt sympathy." The widowed heart can, indeed, feel for all widows, and few feel more than the Queen. The Chaplain of the Forces at Aldershot told the following story at a meeting at Cambridge:—"The Incumbent of Osborne had occasion to visit an aged parishioner. Upon his arrival at the house, as he entered the door where the invalid was, he found, sitting by the bedside, a lady in deep mourning, reading the word of God. He was about to retire, when the lady remarked, "Pray remain. I should not wish the invalid to lose the comfort which a clergyman might afford.' The lady retired, and the clergyman found lying on the bed a book, with texts of

Scripture adapted to the sick ; and he found that out of that book portions of Scripture had been read by the lady in black. That lady was the Queen of England."

There have been many memorials raised to Prince Albert. The Queen herself inaugurated the beautiful one in South Kensington Museum, and in many towns in England his memory is perpetuated. But the best of all memorials is the *Albert Medal*, a new decoration instituted by the Queen, intended to be awarded to persons who should endanger their own lives in saving, or endeavouring to save, the lives of others from shipwreck or other perils of the sea. It consists of an oval-shaped badge of gold, enamelled in dark blue, on which is a monogram, composed of the letters V. and A. interlaced, with an anchor erect in gold, surmounted with a garter in bronze, on which is inscribed in raised gold letters, "For gallantry in saving life at sea."

To show that the Queen neglected none of her duties, we quote some words of the Duke of Argyle on the Queen and public affairs :—"It is a remarkable thing, as it has often appeared to me, how ill-informed many persons are on the practical working of that constitutional government under which we live. Many may, perhaps, recollect that some years ago, in consequence of a remarkable political incident, some explanations were made in the House of Commons upon this subject, and it really appeared almost as if many persons in this country then learned for the first time that the Sovereign of England is not, and never has been, a mere nominal sovereign ; that the sovereigns of this country do take, and are expected to take, an active personal share in that government which is conducted in their name.

"I think it a circumstance worthy of observation, and which ought to be known to all the people of this country, that during all the years of the Queen's affliction, during which she has lived necessarily in comparative retirement, she has omitted no part of that public duty which concerns

her as Sovereign of this country ; that on no occasion during her grief has she struck work, so to speak, in those public duties which belong to her exalted position ; and I am sure that when the Queen re-appears again on more public occasions, the people of this country will regard her only with increased affection, from the recollection they will have that during all the time of her care and sorrow, she has devoted herself, without one day's intermission, to those cares of government which belong to her position as Sovereign of this country."





CHAPTER XX.

The Marriages of the Princess Alice and the Prince of Wales.

“Break, happy land, into earlier flowers !
Make music, Oh bird, in the new-budded bowers !
Blazon your mottoes of blessing and prayer,
Welcome her, welcome her, all that is ours !

· · · · ·
The sea-king's daughter, as happy as fair,
Blissful bride of a blissful heir ;
Bride of the heir of the kings of the sea—
Oh joy to the people, and joy to the throne,
Come to us, love us, and make us your own ;
For Saxon, or Dane, or Norman, we
Teuton, or Celt, or whatever we be,
We are each all Dane in our welcome of thee,
Alexandra ! ”



N the 1st of July 1862, the Queen and the royal family, and a few invited guests, were present at the marriage of the Princess Alice. It had been postponed in consequence of the death of her father, and it was a very quiet wedding. The Archbishop of York married the Princess, and she and her

ins and the Prince Louis of Hesse, spent as much time as possible in England with the Queen, immediately after her marriage.

The Prince of Wales had returned from his visit in the East in time to be present at the marriage of his sister. He went, accompanied by General Bruce and the late Dean of Westminster, first to Alexandria, and thence to Cairo, the Pyramids, Suez, Jaffa, and Jerusalem. They reached the Holy City on the 31st of March, and remained some days. Dean Stanley wrote an account to the *Times* of an incident that occurred there :—"The Mosque of Hebron is, of all the holy places in Palestine, the one which has excited in modern times the keenest curiosity, and which at the same time rests on the best historical evidence. The effort made by the Prince of Wales, in his journey of 1862, gave to his Eastern pilgrimage a peculiar value, such as has been attached to the visit of no other European Prince to the Holy Land. Negotiations devolved on General Bruce, the governor of the Prince of Wales. . . . Sûrâya Pasha offered every other civility or honour that could be paid. The General took his position on the ground that, since the opening of the other holy places, this was the one honour left for the Turkish Government to award on the rare occasion of a visit of the Prince of Wales. . . . The shrine of Sarah we were requested not to enter, as being that of a woman. A pall lay over it. The shrine of Abraham, after a momentary hesitation, was thrown open. The guardians groaned aloud. But their chief turned to us with the remark, 'The princes of any other nation should have passed over my dead body sooner than enter, but to the eldest son of the Queen of England we are willing to accord even this privilege.' He stepped in before us, and offered an ejaculatory prayer to the dead patriarch, 'Oh, friend of God, forgive this intrusion.' We then entered. The chamber is cased in marble. . . . But on requesting

to see the tomb of Isaac, we were entreated not to enter ; and on asking, with some surprise, why an objection which had been conceded for Abraham should be raised in the case of his far less eminent son, were answered that the difference lay in the character of the two patriarchs. Abraham was full of loving-kindness ; he had withstood even the resolution of God against Sodom and Gomorrah. He was goodness itself, and would overlook any affront. But Isaac was proverbially jealous, and it was exceedingly dangerous to exasperate him."

The Dean says that on one occasion they found the stairs of the castle of the Maromite Sheykh Joseph "lined with a crowd of eager applicants, 'sick people, taken with divers diseases,' who, hearing that there was a medical man in the party, had thronged round him, 'beseeching him that he would heal them.' . . . It was an affecting scene. Our kind doctor was distressed to find how many cases there were which, with proper medical appliances, might have been cured ; and on returning to the ship, by the Prince's desire, a store of medicine was sent back, with Arabic labels, directing how and for what purpose they should be used."

The Prince spent several weeks in Syria, and returned by Smyrna, Constantinople, Athens, Cephalonias, and Malta, reaching Windsor Castle on the evening of the 4th of June.

In September the Queen and the royal family departed from Woolwich on a Continental excursion, and it was then that the preliminaries of a marriage between the Prince of Wales and the Princess Alexandra of Denmark were settled. On the 4th of November it was announced in the *Gazette* that her Majesty, in Council, had consented to this marriage. On Sunday, the 9th of November, the Prince completed his twenty-first year, and there were rejoicings in London and the provinces in honour of the attainment of his majority by his royal highness.

The Princess Alexandra soon after arrived at Osborne, on a short visit to the Queen; and at the end of a few days returned to Copenhagen.

On the 19th of February, the Queen's message, referring to the marriage, being communicated to both Houses of Parliament, Lord Palmerston proposed, that besides the revenues from the Duchy of Cornwall, the Prince should receive £40,000 per annum from the Consolidated Fund, the Princess of Wales to have £10,000 per annum from the same source. There was no dissent to this proposition, and a bill to the effect passed both Houses, and received the royal assent.

Marlborough House, Pall Mall, was to be the residence of the Prince, and active preparations were made for the wedding, and for the reception of the Prince and his bride. Their marriage was, indeed, the event of the year.

The Princess Alexandra left Copenhagen on the 26th of February, when all the houses from the Royal Palace to the railway station were adorned with garlands, and decorated with English and Scandinavian flags, and immense crowds thronged the streets. Her parents accompanied the Princess, and also her eldest brother, Prince Frederick. They reached Brussels on the 2d of March, and spent the next two days with the King of the Belgians, then they went to Antwerp. At Antwerp they found the Queen's yacht, the *Victoria and Albert*, which had been sent to convey them over to England, waiting for them. They embarked and steamed away, and on the sixth reached the Nore. Several ships of war escorted them, and they proceeded to Margate Roads, where the ship was anchored for the night, and then the Princess received from the Mayor and Corporation of Margate an address of welcome and congratulation. At Sheerness, there were illuminations and bonfires, and letters of blue lights ten feet high formed the word "Welcome" along the beach. On the morning of

the seventh, the royal yacht, accompanied by three of her Majesty's ships, the *Warrior*, the *Emerald*, and the *Racoon*, reached Gravesend.

The Prince of Wales had gone down early to meet his bride, and he went on board to give her his kiss of welcome as soon as the anchor was dropped. Then the Princess, her parents, and suite, landed with her, and were received by the Mayor and Corporation. Mrs. Sams, the wife of the Mayor, presented a handsome bouquet-holder, filled with choice flowers, to the Princess; and a number of young ladies—"all uniformly dressed in white tarlatan skirts, and burnous cloaks, straw hats garlanded with oak leaves and acorns, with white satin shoes, their dresses being trimmed with white rosettes made of Coventry riband"—strewn flowers along the way to the carriages. There were six carriages, each drawn by four horses, in the first of which rode the Prince of Wales, the Princess Alexandra, and her parents.

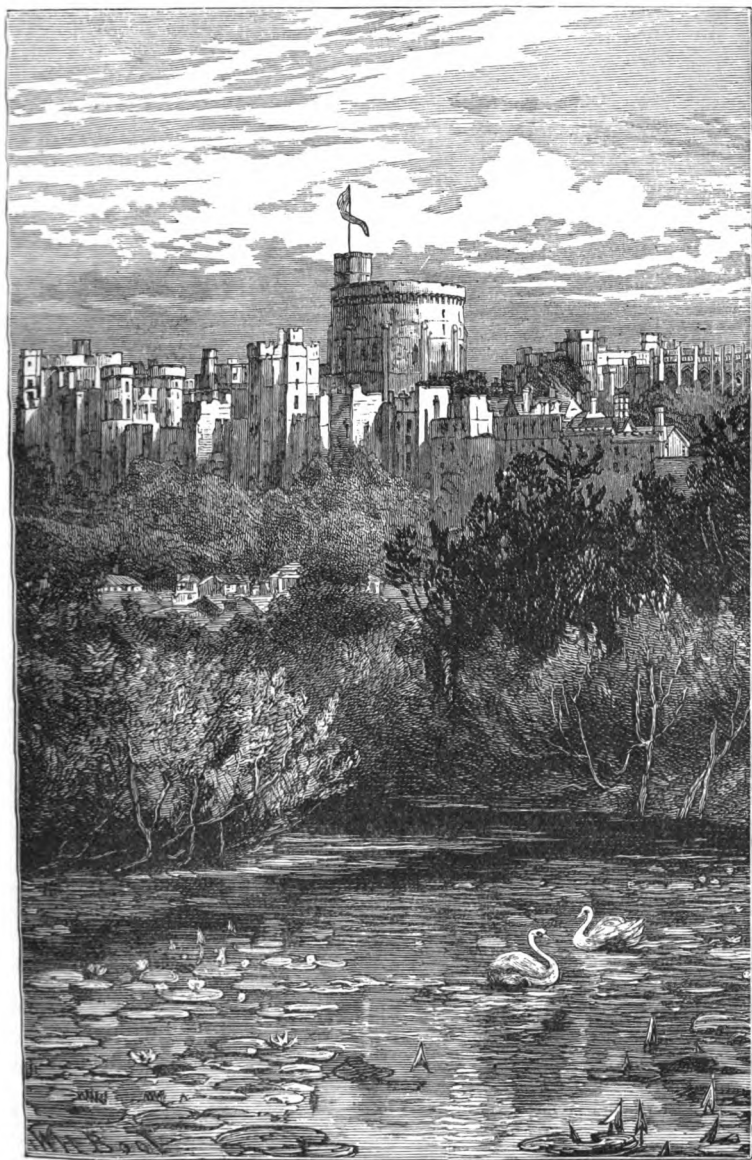
They travelled by rail to the Bricklayers' Arms Station in London. Here great preparations had been made for their reception. Seats covered with crimson cloth had been erected to accommodate 600 or 700 persons; and the Princess rested for a short time in rooms that had been specially and beautifully fitted up for her reception. Here she was joined by the Duke of Cambridge, the Prince of Prussia, the Duke of Saxe-Coburg, the Count of Flanders, the Lord Mayor and Sheriff, and other personages. Several addresses were presented, and the royal party again took the carriages; and, accompanied by the civic coaches, and detachments of the Horse and Life Guards, the procession proceeded by London Bridge, Cheapside, St. Paul's Churchyard, Ludgate Hill, Fleet Street, the Strand, Pall Mall, Hyde Park, and the Edgeware Road, to Paddington. All along the route there were enthusiastic demonstrations of welcome, the houses were decorated, and the windows filled

with ladies, and shouts of loyalty were heard everywhere. Triumphant arches were erected at London Bridge, Fishmongers' Hall, and other places. Temple Bar was made into "a triumphal arch, the upper part representing a tent of cloth of gold." Seventeen thousand volunteers were drawn up in Hyde Park. The last sounds they heard were those of cheering as the train left Paddington, and although it rained all the time, Slough station was crowded by people as loyal and glad as the Londoners had been. At Eton the college boys gave nine hearty cheers as the train passed along. At Windsor their greeting was all that could be desired; and at the castle the Queen received her new daughter with loving welcome, taking her in her arms, and kissing her in true motherly fashion. The illuminations were on a scale so large and grand that they were visible for twenty miles around.

The next day the Lord Mayor, Sheriffs, and a deputation from the Courts of Aldermen and Common Council of London, went to Windsor to present the Princess with a diamond necklace and ear-rings, valued at £10,000.

The marriage took place at the Royal Chapel, Windsor. The Queen was present, but she took no part in the festivities. She was dressed in deep mourning, and looked on from the royal closet, where she could see without being seen. She was, doubtless, full of sorrowful thoughts for him who would have graced the day, and made it so much more satisfactory with his presence; whom she missed and longed for every day, but especially on such days as this. The Archbishop of Canterbury, assisted by the Bishops of London and Chester, and the Dean of Windsor, performed the ceremony.

They spent their honeymoon at Osborne, where they arrived in the evening, receiving all along their journey demonstrations of respect and good-will which followed them. The day was kept as a national holiday throughout



WINDSOR CASTLE FROM THE RIVER.

Great Britain. It was especially made a happy time for the old people and the children. Large sums of money were spent in giving feasts to schools, and in illuminations.

The wedding presents sent to the Princess were of great value, and a room was set apart at the Kensington Museum for the exhibition of them, in order to gratify the public. It was a splendid collection, particularly well worthy of a visit.

The Prince of Wales had already taken his place in the House of Lords, and on the 8th of June he took up his freedom of a citizen of London by birth. The Lord Mayor gave, in honour of his accession to the roll of the freemen of London, a magnificent ball at Guildhall, two thousand invitations being issued, and the occasion was one of the greatest magnitude and splendour ever witnessed in London.

On the 16th of June the Prince and Princess of Wales visited Oxford, when the degree of D.C.L. was conferred upon his royal highness.

On the 4th of August the Prince of Wales opened the new Town Hall at Halifax ; and although the day was wet, immense crowds of Yorkshiremen were present, and greeted him most heartily.

In October he was elected a member of the Society of Arts, of which he became president, as his father had been before him. The Prince having now fairly embarked in public life, held *levées* instead of his mother, who still lived in retirement. Sir Charles Lyell has given an interesting account of his visit to Osborne some time after the death of the Prince Consort.

"I only got a short walk in the garden with Sir James Clark, when the Prince of Hesse sent for me, and, as I entered, the Princess Alice received me, and said she remembered me since Balmoral days, and introduced me to her husband. Her manners are very charming, and she talks most freely on all subjects. He has really read me as

far as the end of glacial chapters with attention. They had been discussing the time it would take for all the existing races to have come from one original pair. Arthur Stanley is evidently a very great favourite with the Princess. . . . The Queen sent for me before four o'clock, and talked with me alone for an hour and a quarter, mostly about Prince Albert, leading me also to talk of him. Arthur Stanley recommended her to read my *Antiquity*. She asked me a good deal about the Darwinian theory, as well as *Antiquity of Man*. She has a clear understanding, and thinks quite fearlessly for herself, and yet very modestly. Nothing could be more natural and touching than her admiration for the Prince. She said that for one who had so much enjoyment in the present, which he found wherever he was, it was remarkable that he was cheerful whenever he had to change place or business. If they were at Balmoral or Osborne, and were called to Windsor, he not only went, but never allowed himself to be put out. As soon as we had done talking over books, etc., I went to the Swiss cottage, where the Prince of Hesse and Prince Alfred were waiting. The Princess Helena and her next sister joined us at the museum.

"I then started with Becker and Ruland on a geological walk along the sea-side, and in our way fell in first with the Queen driving Princess Alice in a pony-car. They went alone, without any servant, to the sea-side, called a boat, and took a row afterwards. Prince Alfred took a boat, and rowed the Prince of Hesse out to the Queen's boat. He had no sailor to help him. In our walk we fell in with Miss Hilliard and Princess Beatrice, who asked us to come to a small miniature fort constructed in the grounds by Prince Alfred, with a moat and rampart and drawbridge. Here she played all sorts of pranks with Becker, who barked as a dog, and then got into a small miniature barrack, and then shut her up in it, and so on. She has wonderful

spirits. We went over the kitchen in the Swiss cottage, in which the royal children cook all sorts of things, quite a large *batterie de cuisine*, and they invite Becker and others to come and eat the produce. When the Swiss cottage, in part of which the gardener lives, was built, the boys used to work two or three hours a day in earnest with the labourers, and got certificates of work done from the foreman, and sent in a regular bill, which the Prince Consort paid exactly according to the then rate of wages, to give them an idea of such things. Then we went over the tool-house—the initials of every child on each watering-pot, wheelbarrow, etc.; then over the separate garden plots belonging to each, from the Princess Royal's down to Princess Beatrice's, each of equal size. The Queen has just started, with Lady Mount-Edgumbe and Sir James Clark, to see Netley Hospital. It is almost the first time she has proposed anything of the kind, and they are all glad she is going. I take for granted that Princess Alice has also gone, but I did not hear. The Queen has always dined privately with her own family, and will, I suppose, do so to-day. A most beautiful small aneroid, not bigger than a very large pocket watch, has come down from Negretti, for the Queen to measure heights with at Balmoral. They have a fine telescope for star-gazing, and the night I arrived saw Jupiter and his satellites, which I only heard about to-day. At every turn one meets the hand of the Prince Consort. . . . I dare say Mary and Katherine will have told you my Osborne news. It was a great satisfaction to have a good long talk quite alone with the Queen for an hour and a quarter, and about one for whom I had such a regard, and for whom I felt, though it would not be etiquette to say so, such real friendship as I did for the late Prince Albert. I do not think she has given way more than is perfectly natural; all necessary duties she has performed. . . . She said he was always cheerful, and determined to think everything for the best;—

a short life, among other things, of which he had sometimes a slight presentiment, in spite of his good health. She has, of course, been reading many serious books, and I asked her if she had read what Sir Benjamin Brodie has said about death. She said she had, and was much struck with his observing that if we knew what those we had loved were doing in another world, or if we even knew the exact time of our own death, it would alter the whole complexion of our lives, and probably make us perform our duties less well in this life. I had a talk with Princess Alice and her husband separately, in their rooms, on another occasion, and another evening a long conversation with the Queen, Prince and Princess of Hesse, and Prince Alfred, very cheerful, about books and things in general. One morning I had a walk with the Prince of Hesse and Prince Alfred, and no one else; and Prince Alfred showed me over the museum in the garden, in which are all the birds stuffed which he and the Prince of Wales had shot in different countries."

On the 8th of January 1864 the Prince of Wales' first son was born, and received at his baptism the name of Albert Victor Christian Edward. The Queen herself named the Prince, being present, and pronouncing the name when the Archbishop said, "Name this child." Evidently her Majesty felt the greatest interest in the birth of the boy, who will probably some day be king of England, and bear the title of Albert the First.

That year Garibaldi came to England, and received a very cordial welcome; and that year, too, the three hundredth anniversary of Shakespeare's birthday was kept.





CHAPTER XXI.

In Quiet Times.

“The care
That yokes with empires yield you time
To make demand of modern rhyme.”

IT was evident that although the Queen lived in seclusion, she knew very well what was passing around her. For the most part, the land was enjoying a time of tranquillity, but there were events that filled her with sorrow, in England and other parts of the world. The Queen joined in the sorrows and anxieties of all nations, and would not shut herself away from the world. In our own country several railway accidents had occurred, and on New Year's Day 1865 the following letter was addressed to all the leading railway companies:—

“Sir Charles Phipps has received the commands of her Majesty the Queen to call the attention of the directors of the — to the increasing number of accidents which have lately occurred upon different lines of railroad; and to express her Majesty's warmest hope that the directors of

the — will carefully consider every means of guarding against these misfortunes, which are not at all the necessary accompaniments of railway travelling. It is not for her own safety that the Queen has wished to provide, in thus calling the attention of the company to the late disasters. Her Majesty is aware that, when she travels, extraordinary precautions are taken ; but it is on account of her family, of those travelling upon her service, and of her people generally, that she expresses the hope that the same security may be ensured for all as is so carefully provided for herself. The Queen hopes it is unnecessary for her to recall to the recollection of the railway directors the heavy responsibility which they have assumed, since they have succeeded in obtaining the monopoly of the means of travelling of almost the entire population of the country."

It was, perhaps, owing to this letter that greater thought and attention were given to railway accidents ; but the letter did not prevent them, for several disastrous ones occurred during the year.

The deaths of two political men of celebrity occurred in that year. Mr. Cobden died on the 2d of April, and at the time of his death had not quite completed his sixty-first year. His death was a great loss to the country ; and Mr. Disraeli, who had opposed him, paid a well-earned tribute to the Free Trader, when he said that when the verdict of posterity should be declared on his life and conduct, it would be said of Mr. Cobden that, looking to his expressions and deeds, he was, without doubt, the greatest political character that the pure middle-class of this country had as yet produced ; that he was an ornament to the House of Commons, and an honour to England.

Lord Palmerston died at Brockett Hall on the 18th of October. He had, with Mr. Bright, spoken in generous terms of Mr. Cobden ; little deeming that he would so soon follow him. He had been ill for a week, but on the even-

ing of the seventeenth his doctor issued a bulletin to the effect that he was better; but a later bulletin stated that he was worse, and, on the morning of the eighteenth, was declared to be gradually sinking. At a quarter before eleven he died, having reached the eighty-first year of his age. He had expressed a wish to be buried quietly; but the Queen desired that he should be buried in Westminster Abbey, and her wish was obeyed. Volunteers came up from Romsey, near Broadlands, where Lord Palmerston was born, and fourteen foreign states and twenty-three provincial corporations sent their representatives to the funeral. The pall was borne by ten of his colleagues in the cabinet, and the Prince of Wales and the Duke of Cambridge were among the mourners. All people felt that England had sustained a great loss; the ships lowered their flags to half-mast, and nearly all the shops in the metropolis were closed.

The Queen felt that she had lost a friend, but another dearer and nearer one was taken before the year closed, when her uncle Leopold, King of the Belgians, died, and her heart was again torn with sorrow.

Another son was born to the Prince of Wales during the year; and the Prince himself opened the Irish International Exhibition, and inaugurated a statue, erected by the people of Wales at Tenby, to the memory of the late Prince Consort.

There were troubles in Ireland, where the Fenians had to be suppressed; and in England there were strikes among the iron-workers in North Staffordshire. The cattle-plague, which destroyed the lives of thousands of animals, and the cholera, which was exceedingly fatal among the people, filled with sorrow many hearts and homes.

The Queen opened Parliament in person at the beginning of the year 1866, but she did not wear the robes of state, and commanded the Lord Chancellor to read her speech.

It was a new Parliament, an election having taken place a short time before. Her speech commenced by stating that "Her Majesty had recently declared her consent to a marriage between the Princess Helena and Prince Christian of Schleswig-Holstein Souderburg Augustenburg, and trusted the union would be prosperous and happy. The death of her beloved uncle, the King of the Belgians, had filled her with profound grief, but she felt confident the wisdom he evinced during his reign would animate his successor. The relations with foreign powers were friendly and satisfactory, and her Majesty saw no cause to fear any disturbance of the general peace. . . . The prevalence of the cattle disease gave her Majesty great concern, and the attention of Parliament, she said, would be called to that subject." The Fenian conspiracy was mentioned as adverse to authority and religion. Soon after, the Government was defeated on the Reform Bill, brought in by Mr. Gladstone, and a Conservative Administration was formed.

The Queen always took a great interest in travellers. "She sent for Livingstone, who attended her Majesty at the Palace, without ceremony, in his black coat and blue trousers, and his cap surrounded with a stripe of gold lace. This was his usual attire, and his cap had now become the appropriate distinction of one of her Majesty's consuls—an official position to which the traveller attaches great importance, as giving him consequence in the eyes of natives, and authority over the members of the expedition. The Queen conversed with him affably for half-an-hour on the subject of his travels. Dr. Livingstone told her Majesty that he would now be able to say to the natives that he had seen his chief, his not having done so before having been a constant subject of surprise to the children of the African wilderness. He mentioned to her Majesty also that the people were in the habit of inquiring whether his chief were wealthy; and when he assured them that she was very

wealthy, they would ask how many cows she had got ; a question at which the Queen laughed heartily."

This is taken from Dr. Blaikie's *Personal Life of Dr. Livingstone*. Many other lives of eminent men show how heartily she entered into the work they did, and how truly she sympathised with all efforts of every kind that were put forth to increase the intelligence of her people. Lord Macaulay, Tytler, the Scottish historian, Ticknor of Boston, America, Kingsley, Alford, and the Poet Laureate, who is greatly honoured by her Majesty, have all visited her.

In Mr. Forster's *Life of Charles Dickens* we have an interesting account of the Queen's acquaintance with the novelist :—

"It had been hoped to obtain her Majesty's name for the Jerrold performances in 1857, but, being a public effort in behalf of an individual, assent would have involved 'either perpetual compliance or the giving of perpetual offence.' Her Majesty, however, then sent, through Colonel Phipps, a request to Dickens that he would select a room in the Palace, do what he would with it, and let her see the play there. I said to Colonel Phipps thereupon (21st of June 1857), 'that the idea was not quite new to me ; that I did not feel easy as to the social position of my daughters, etc., at a Court under those circumstances ; and that I would beg her Majesty to excuse me if any other way of seeing the play could be devised.' To this Phipps said he had not thought of the objection, but had not the slightest doubt I was right. I then proposed that the Queen should come to the Gallery of Illustration a week before the subscription night, and should have the room entirely at her own disposal, and should invite her own company. This, with the good sense that seems to accompany her good nature on all occasions, she resolved within a few hours to do. The effect of the performances was a great gratification. 'My gracious Sovereign' (5th July 1857) 'was so pleased that

she sent round, begging me to go and see her, and accept her thanks. I replied that I was in my farce dress, and must beg to be excused.' Whereupon she sent again saying that the dress 'could not be so ridiculous as that,' and repeating the request. I sent my duty in reply, but again hoped her Majesty would have the kindness to excuse my presenting myself in a costume and appearance that was not my own. I was mighty glad to think, when I awoke this morning, that I had carried the point !'

"The opportunity of presenting himself in his own costume did not arrive till the year of his death, another effort meanwhile made having proved also unsuccessful. 'I was put into a state of much perplexity on Sunday (30th March 1858). I don't know who had spoken to my informant, but it seems that the Queen is bent upon hearing the *Carol* read, and has expressed her desire to bring it about without offence, and hesitating about the manner of it, in consequence of my having begged to be excused from going to her when she sent for me after the *Frozen Deep*. I parried the thing as well as I could, but being asked to be prepared with a considerate and obliging answer, as it was known the request would be preferred, I said, 'Well, I supposed Colonel Phipps would speak to me about it, and if it were he who did so, I should assure him of my desire to meet any wish of her Majesty's, and should express my hope that she would indulge me by making one of some audience or other—for I thought the audience necessary to the effect. Thus it stands, but it bothers me.'

"The difficulty was not surmounted, but her Majesty's continued interest in the *Carol* was shown by her purchase of a copy of it, with Dickens' autograph, at Thackeray's sale; and at last there came, in the year of his death, the interview with the author, whose popularity dated from her accession, whose books had entertained larger numbers of her subjects than those of any other contemporary writer, and

whose genius will be counted among the glories of her reign. Accidents led to it. Dickens had brought with him, from America, some large and striking photographs of the battle-fields of the civil war, which the Queen, having heard of them through Mr. Helps, expressed a desire to look at. Dickens sent them at once ; and went afterwards to Buckingham Palace with Mr. Helps, at her Majesty's request, that she might see and thank him in person.

"The Queen's kindness left a strong impression on Dickens. Upon her Majesty's regret not to have heard his readings, Dickens intimated that they had now become a thing of the past, while he acknowledged gratefully her Majesty's compliment in regard to them. She spoke to him of the impression made upon her by his acting in the *Frozen Deep* ; and on his stating, in reply to her inquiry, that the little play had not been very successful on the public stage, said this did not surprise her, since it no longer had the advantage of his performance in it. Then arose a mention of some alleged discourtesy shown to Prince Arthur in New York ; and he begged her Majesty not to confound the true Americans of that city with the Fenian portion of its Irish population, on which she made the quiet comment, that she was convinced the people about the Prince had made too much of the affair. He related to her the story of President Lincoln's dream, the night before his murder. She asked him to give her his writings, and could she have them that afternoon ? But he begged to be allowed to send a bound copy. Her Majesty then took from a table her own book on the Highlands, with an autograph inscription, 'To Charles Dickens,' and saying that the 'humblest' of writers would be ashamed to offer it to 'one of the greatest ;' but that Mr. Helps, being asked to give it, had remarked that it would be valued most from herself, closed the interview by placing it in his hands."

The Princess Helena and Prince Christian were married

at Windsor Castle on the 5th July 1866. A little before that time the Duke of Edinburgh received the freedom of the city of London. It was presented to him in a casket made of British oak, on account of his being a sailor. In August the Prince and Princess of Wales went to York, where a memorial window in the Guildhall to the memory of the late Prince Consort was unveiled in their presence. The Queen herself, in November, opened the new waterworks at Aberdeen, and inaugurated a statue to the memory of the Prince Consort at Wolverhampton.

A quiet wedding took place on the 12th July of that year, 1866—it was that between the Princess Mary of Cambridge and His Serene Highness the Prince of Teck. The ceremony was unattended by any state pageantry or pomp, although many illustrious visitors, the Queen of England among them, were present. The Princess had lived in seclusion with her mother at Kew, and preferred to be married in the little church where she had been confirmed. She was married, as she herself expressed it, “among her own people,” a circumstance which very much gratified the people of Kew. The Princess was greatly beloved for her generous kindness and many acts of charity; and every one united in the wish that her union with the Prince of Teck might be long and happy.





CHAPTER XXII.

Odds and Ends of Work.

"Whatsoever we do, it is done for the right ;
What our hands find to do, we do with our might."

WE take up some omitted threads of our narrative. The year 1865 was one of peace and comparative progress, though some events occurred which made all hearts sad. There was a disastrous inundation at Sheffield, in consequence of the bursting of the Bradford reservoir, by which at least two hundred and seventy persons perished. A relief fund was set on foot, which soon reached the sum of £5000, the Queen contributing £200. The murder of Mr. Briggs in a railway carriage also excited some attention, and awoke some fears. The old Savoy Chapel, which had been built in 1505, was destroyed by fire. There were riots in Belfast. There was a great fire in the city of London ; and an explosion of gunpowder at Erith. There was a disastrous storm at the mouth of the Tyne, where terrible shipwrecks occurred, and fearful accidents on several of the railways ; but this

or similar events darken every year, and this was not exceptionally grave.

The Queen visited the Hospital for Consumptives at Brompton, and made particular inquiries into the modes of treatment, the arrangements for the comfort of the patients; and also went through the larders and kitchen. The wards she particularly inspected were the Victoria, the Albert, the Fowlis, and the Jenny Lind. She spoke kindly to the sufferers; one, a poor soldier, one of the survivors of the Balaclava charge, receiving especial attention.

The *Annual Register* for the year says—"A fire broke out at Marlborough House, the residence of the Prince of Wales. The fire commenced in the ventilating shaft running from the bottom to the top of the building. In these wooden shafts gas-burners swing to and fro—it is supposed that one of them must have been placed too near the wood-work, for it was found to be on fire and burning upwards apace. A strong force, numbering between forty and fifty, was quickly mustered from the stables, employed in conveying hose to the roof; but, in the meantime, energetic efforts were made by the servants of the household and others to check the progress of the fire, and to do this air was excluded from the place as much as possible, while water from a large tank on the roof was poured in abundance on all the places apparently in danger. All worked vigorously enough, but few with such ardour as the Prince of Wales himself. He was on the spot immediately, and seeing the emergency of the case, threw off coat and waistcoat, and worked with the buckets most diligently. Some had fears that the fire had spread under the roof, and an entrance was made there. The Prince headed the party, and failing to keep to the rafters, he put his foot through the lath and plaster, and was in peril of going through the ceiling to the room beneath. Several engines

arrived, but by the exertions of the Prince and the people by whom he was assisted, the fire was all but extinguished before they came up. The Duke of Sutherland arrived soon after the alarm was given, as did also the Duke of St. Albans, the Honourable Spencer Ponsonby, and other gentlemen; and it was somewhat remarkable that while the fire was raging Lord Derby and Lord Palmerston called at Marlborough House. As soon as the fire declared itself, the Princess of Wales removed to the other side of the royal residence, overlooking St. James's Palace, whither Prince Albert Victor and his infant brother were also conveyed. The Prince of Wales, as soon as the fire was extinguished, ordered refreshments to be served out to the blackened and begrimed people who had worked with him, and in a short time tranquillity was restored, and the Prince and Princess and their children departed for Windsor."

One of the great events of the year was the completion of the Atlantic Cable. Several attempts had been made, but at last the enterprise was successful, and the first message of congratulation, between the Queen and the President of the United States, were sent and received.

In 1866 occurred the day memorable as "Black Friday," when commercial panics in London and elsewhere shook the confidence of the people, and caused ruin to many houses. During that year the Princess of Wales gave birth to another son, and in the following year, 1867, the first daughter was born.

The Queen tried to follow in the steps of her husband, and carry on the work which he had begun; and in May 1867 she laid the foundation-stone of the Albert Hall of Arts and Sciences, on which occasion her Majesty said—"It has been with a struggle that I have nerved myself to a compliance with the wish that I should take part in this day's ceremony; but I have been sustained by the thought

that I should assist by my presence in promoting the accomplishment of his great designs, to whose memory the gratitude and affection of the country are now rearing a noble monument, which I trust may yet look down on such a centre of institutions for the promotion of art and science as it was his fond wish to establish here. It is my wish that the hall should bear his name to whom it will have owed its existence, and be called the 'Royal Albert Hall of Arts and Sciences.'"

On 13th May 1868 the Queen laid the foundation stone of the new St. Thomas's Hospital, which is situated on the right bank of the Thames, near Lambeth Palace. Many peers and members of the House of Commons were present, and about five thousand spectators. Her Majesty was received with many and hearty demonstrations of loyalty and love; and she said—"It is with sincere pleasure that I lay the first stone of the noble building which you are about to dedicate to the use of the suffering poor. St. Thomas's Hospital, founded by my predecessor, Edward VI., from the services which it rendered to humanity, naturally attracted the attention of my esteemed husband, whose heart and mind were ever interested in institutions of so beneficial a character. It is a solace to me to follow his example in promoting the objects which you have in view. I think that your hospital upon its new site, by various improvements which experience and sanitary skill suggest, will secure the greatest benefit to its suffering inmates, and provide an admirable school for nurses, and for the promotion of medical schools of science. I thank you for the loyal and sympathising expression of your feeling at the late attempt to take away the life of my dear son, the Duke of Edinburgh, and join in your prayers that the same good Providence which preserved him from the assassin will soon restore him in health and safety to his family and country."

The reference made by the Queen to her son, the Duke of

Edinburgh, brought loud cheers. In truth, the Duke had narrowly escaped assassination. He was at Sydney, and on the 12th of March he consented to join a pic-nic at Clontay, which had been partly organised in honour of his visit, and partly to help the funds of a Sailors' Home. He was talking to Sir William Manning, when a person took deliberate aim at his royal highness with a revolver, and fired one barrel, the shot taking effect in the Duke's back. He fell forward on his hands and knees, and exclaimed, "Good God, my back is broken!" It was not as bad as he feared, however. He was at once carried to his tent and examined, when it was found that no vital part had been attacked. He did not lose consciousness, although the shock to his nervous system was great, and the loss of blood considerable. He sent a cheery message to the anxious spectators waiting round the tent—"I am not much hurt; I shall be better presently." And so it proved, for on the eighteenth he was pronounced convalescent.

The Prince enjoyed his visit greatly all the same for this event, which might have proved more serious than it did. The people could not rest until they had given some substantial proof of their gratitude for his recovery, and they subscribed more than £7000 towards the erection of an hospital, to be called the Albert Hospital of Sydney. When he left Australia he took with him a large and varied collection of colonial birds and animals; also many works of colonial art and industry. One strange treasure that he brought to England was the pistol with which he had been shot, and which he expressed himself particularly anxious to secure. On his last public appearance he said—"I sincerely regret on your part that there should have occurred any one incident during my sojourn among you which should have detracted from the general satisfaction which I believe my visit to Australia has given. Through the merciful interposition of Providence, the injury I received was but

slight, and I believe no further evil consequences are to be anticipated from the wound."

In the meantime the Princess of Wales was winning golden opinions from every one in England. She had after her marriage taken her place quite as one of the Queen's own children, her pet name amongst them being "Alex." Her kindness of heart have always caused her to know how to do the right thing at the right time; as, for instance—when she was at Cambridge with the Prince, an undergraduate spread his gown on the pathway for her to walk on, she, although puzzled and amazed by the very superfluous act of devotion, lifted her dress and put her foot on the gown, bowing her acknowledgments to the student; and again when she was visiting Denmark, the crowd of people under her window kept waiting and increasing so that she did not know what to do, until a happy thought struck her to gratify the assemblage by holding her baby in her arms before them, that all might see.

The *Guelph Herald* related an interesting anecdote of the kindness of the Princess:—"Crossing the hall of Marlborough House late one afternoon, a few days before Christmas, her royal highness observed a young girl of singularly delicate and refined appearance, waiting, and also standing, though evidently fatigued and faint. The Princess kindly told her to sit down, asked her errand, and discovered that she had brought home some little garments which had been ordered for the children, and which the Princess, who is much interested in sewing machines and understands their merits, had desired should be made for her. Prepossessed by the modest, intelligent appearance and gentle manners of the girl, her royal highness desired her to follow her to her room, which she did without the remotest idea who the beautiful condescending lady was. After an examination of the articles, the Princess asked who it was that had executed the work. The girl modestly confessed

that she herself had done most of it. The Princess said it was done very nicely, and finally drew from her the simple facts of her condition; how she had an invalid mother whom she was obliged to leave all alone while she went to a shop to work; how the fashionable rage for machine sewing had suggested to her to become a finished operator, with the hope that at some future time she might own a machine of her own, and earn something more than bread for her poor sick mother. The Princess rang the bell, ordered a bottle of wine, some biscuits and oranges, to be packed and brought to her; meanwhile, she had asked the wondering girl where she lived, and taken down the address upon her tablets. She then gave her the delicacies which had been put into a neat little basket, and told her to take them to her mother.

“On Christmas morning, into the clean apartment of the invalid mother and her astonished and delighted daughter, was borne a handsome sewing machine, with a slip of paper on which were the words—‘A Christmas gift from Alexandra.’”

That our Queen cares for the best welfare of her grandchildren every one knows, and it was certainly proved by a present which she made to Prince Victor, son of the Prince and Princess of Wales. It was a silver statuette of the Prince Consort, three feet two-and-a-half inches in height. His royal highness is in a standing position in gilt armour, represented as “Christian” in the *Pilgrim’s Progress*, and around the plinth on which the figure stands is the verse from Timothy, “I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith.” The shield of the Prince rests against the stem of an oak, and the inscription shows that it was presented to the young Prince by Victoria R., his grandmother and godmother, in memory of his beloved grandfather, Albert. In the first and second panels over the royal arms, and over the Queen and Prince Consort’s arms,

are suitable verses. The following verse is inscribed on the third panel, and over the arms of the Prince and Princess of Wales :—

“Walk as he walked, in faith and righteousness ;
Strive as he strove, the weak and poor to aid—
Seek not thyself, but other men to bless ;
So win, like him, a wreath that will not fade.”

The Queen is full of kindness to those about her. It was one of the habits of the Prince Consort to show the greatest consideration to those who lived in his own household, and the Queen has always done the same. She values greatly her old servants. Of John Brown the Queen says :—“ In 1851 he entered our service permanently, and began in that year leading my pony, and advanced step by step by his good conduct and intelligence. His attention, care, and faithfulness cannot be exceeded, and the state of my health, which of late years has been sorely tried and weakened, renders such qualifications most valuable, and indeed most needful, in a constant attendant upon all occasions. He has since, most deservedly, been promoted to be an upper servant, and my permanent personal attendant (December 1865). He has all the independence and elevated feelings peculiar to the Highland race, and is singularly straightforward, simple-minded, kind-hearted and disinterested ; always ready to oblige, and of a discretion rarely to be met with. He is now in his fortieth year. His father was a small farmer, who lived at the Busk, on the opposite side to Balmoral. He is the second of nine brothers—three of whom have died—two are in Australia and New Zealand, two are living in the neighbourhood of Balmoral ; and the youngest, Archie (Archibald) is valet to our son Leopold, and is an excellent, trustworthy young man.”

Our Queen is wonderfully sympathetic and sensible. The people wanted a photograph of the Queen, and she good-naturedly consented to have one taken. She presented

herself attired in plain black silk, without an ornament of any description. The photographer suggested to her that she should wear some jewels. "No," said the Queen, "this photograph is to go among my people, and I wish to do all in my power to discourage extravagance."

It will be seen that Queen Victoria is a woman of ideas. There is a story told of a visit which Jenny Lind paid to the Queen. The Queen's pianist accompanied the songs which she sang in private to her Majesty, and played some false notes. The Queen, who is a good musician, at once detected this, and as Jenny Lind was about to sing the second song she quietly took the place of the pianist, saying, "I will accompany Miss Lind," which she did perfectly.





CHAPTER XXIII.

The Illness of the Petr.

“Among our ancient mountains,
And from our lovely vales,
Oh, let the prayer re-echo—
God bless the Prince of Wales.”

IN 1869 England received two illustrious visitors—the Viceroy of Egypt and the Sultan of Turkey. The Viceroy stayed a fortnight, and appeared to enjoy it very much. With regard to the Sultan, it was an event without parallel, for “never before had any Father of the Faithful set foot on English soil.” Every respect was shown him by the Queen, the Prince of Wales, and the country. He went to Windsor, to the Covent Garden Opera, the Crystal Palace, and to Spithead, where he saw a naval review.

One remarkable feature of this year was the Fenian scare, which took possession of many people in consequence of what had occurred in Clerkenwell and London, where there had been Fenian outrages resulting fatally. The Prince and Princess of Wales went over to Ireland, and

a white dove was presented to her royal highness as an emblem of peace.

That year the Queen paid a visit to Switzerland, travelling *incognito* as the Countess of Kent. She returned in time to spend the seventh anniversary of the death of the Prince Consort at home with her family, where, within the mausoleum, a special service was performed. The tomb in which the remains of the Prince found a resting-place is hewn from a solid block of dark grey Scotch granite. The hollow within the sarcophagus is made large enough to receive two coffins. That of the Prince occupies one-half, and his widow has reserved space for herself to lie beside him. Upon the lid of the sarcophagus, and over the coffin, is a recumbent figure of the Prince in white marble. The cost of the tomb was £200,000, and was defrayed from her Majesty's private purse.

The Queen had intended to open the Parliament of 1869 in person, but was prevented by the serious illness of Prince Leopold; and the great question with which Mr. Gladstone had to deal was that of the Irish Protestant Church, the bill to repeal which received the royal assent on the 26th of July, having occupied the attention of both Houses for six months. The question of national education occupied the attention of Ministers afterwards. A bill for protecting the property of married women was also passed during this year.

Prince Arthur visited Ireland in April, and in November the Queen appeared among her loving subjects to open Blackfriars Bridge and Holborn Viaduct. She had Queen's weather, the November gloom giving way to bright sunshine. The Londoners had grumbled a little because they had not seen their Queen more frequently among them; but they were all the more glad when she did appear. She was accompanied by their royal highnesses Princesses Louise and Beatrice, and Prince Leopold, and the lords and ladies-

in-waiting. Her Majesty appeared to be in excellent health and spirits, and smilingly bowed her acknowledgments of the hearty greetings of the crowds which filled the streets. "Under St. Sepulchre's Church the girls and boys of the parish and charity schools emulated the blue coat boys opposite, and in return shared with them the motherly smile and nod of the Queen, and the graceful recognition of Princess Louise. There were about thirteen hundred scholars at this point, and the effect of so many shrill voices in acclamation may well be fancied; it seemed to amuse the Queen. Her Majesty's answer to the address presented was as follows:—

"I thank you for your loyal and dutiful address. It has afforded me much pleasure again to visit the city of London. Anxious as I have always been to identify myself with the interests of my people, it has given me unqualified satisfaction to attend at the opening of your new bridge and viaduct. In these works, at once of great practical utility and of architectural ornament to the city, I recognise the spirit of enterprise and improvement which has ever characterised the citizens of London, and I confidently trust that your anticipations of the benefit which will result to the community may be fully realised."

The year 1870 saw the making of two important laws—the Irish Land Act and the Elementary Education Act. The grand ideas embodied in the latter were that Government payments should only be given for secured results, and that the management of these schools should be under School Boards elected by the constituencies. The first election of a Metropolitan School Board took place at the end of the year, and among the successful candidates were two ladies—Miss Elizabeth Garrett, a lady physician, and Miss Emily Davis.

But the great event of the year was the war between France and Germany, which began in July and had not

ended with the close of the year. It has been called the "War of Surprises;" and certainly at its commencement few people imagined that it would prove so disastrous to France as was the case. England remained neutral, and used her neutrality to send aid to the wounded soldiers; but she could not do other than look on with eager interest and sympathy. On the 2nd of August the Emperor of the French telegraphed to the Empress that Louis had received his baptism of fire, and that his presence of mind had drawn tears from the eyes of the soldiers; and on the 6th of September the Prince Imperial came to England as a refugee, and two days later the Empress arrived. The story of her departure from Paris and arrival in England has thus been told:—"It had become evident that the Tuilleries was no longer a safe residence for the Empress, among the signs of the times in this respect being the plundering of the Imperial apartments, and the private effects of the Empress, by the servants of the Imperial household. The Empress, therefore, determined to stay no longer in Paris or in France; and without luggage of any kind, and in a plain carriage, she left Paris and drove to the port of Deauville, near Trouville. But even here means had to be sought for reaching England. Fortunately for the fugitives, the *Gazelle* cutter lay in the harbour, and was to sail on the following day for England with Sir John and Lady Burgoyne. Lady Burgoyne had arrived on board that evening from Switzerland, but the yacht, with Sir John on board, had been lying some ten days in the harbour waiting Lady Burgoyne's arrival from Switzerland, which had necessarily been much delayed by the troubled state of things on the Continent. The first intimation that Sir John Burgoyne received that other persons wished to cross to England in the *Gazelle* with Lady Burgoyne was a few hours before the time appointed for the *Gazelle* to weigh her anchor, when the Empress presented herself,

announced her rank and difficult position, and claimed his protection as an English gentleman. There had been no suspicion by Sir John Burgoyne of the Empress's presence, or intended presence, in the port. Under such unexpected conditions he acted as an Englishman would act. Lady Burgoyne was introduced to the Empress, who became her guest for the voyage across the channel. It was not, however, before her time, which had been already fixed—viz., at seven o'clock on the succeeding morning, the seventh, that the *Gazelle* gave signs of leaving harbour for England, and then, with a large British ensign flying from her peak, she sailed leisurely out of the harbour in charge of a French pilot. At 7.30 A.M. the pilot was discharged, and the *Gazelle* stood across channel for England. For thirty miles from the French land the little cutter had a fair wind, but then the wind suddenly chopped round to the N.W., and the remainder of the voyage was made under a three-reefed main-sail, fore-sail, and storm-jib in the teeth of a fresh gale. The *Gazelle* seamen knew nothing of the Empress of the French being on board, but they very probably made shrewd guesses among themselves relative to her rank. However that may have been, no man left the deck during the night's work across, and every one seemed anxious to shorten the distance between the two lands as much as possible. The *Gazelle* completed her voyage across the Channel by dropping anchor in Ryde Roads at 3.35 A.M. After landing at Ryde from the *Gazelle*, the Empress crossed by steamer to Portsmouth, and proceeded to Hastings to join the Prince Imperial by the South Coast Railway at Brighton. The Empress and the Prince Imperial shortly after took up their residence at Chiselhurst."—*Annual Register*. Here, subsequently, came the Emperor himself, to live in seclusion until he died.

One of the greatest disasters of the year 1870 was the loss of the *Captain*, a six-gun turret ship, which foundered at

sea on the 7th of September. She was commanded by Captain Burgoine, and had on board a crew of five hundred men. The inventor of the vessel, Captain Cowper Coles, was also on board, and several other visitors. Vice-Admiral Symonds had said of her—"She is a most formidable ship, and could, I believe, by her superior armament, destroy all the broad-side ships of the squadron in detail;" and yet she could not live out the heavy gales that were then raging. The Queen, as usual, sent a message of condolence to the sufferers:—"The Queen has already expressed to several of the widows and near relatives of the unfortunate sufferers in the late shipwreck her Majesty's deep sympathy with them in their affliction, but there are many others equally deprived of husbands and relatives whom the Queen is unable to reach except through an official channel. Her Majesty, therefore, desires that measures may be taken to signify to the widows and relatives of the whole of the crew, of all ranks, who perished in the *Captain*, the expression of her Majesty's deep sympathy with them, and to assure them that the Queen feels most acutely the misfortune that has at once deprived her Majesty of one of her finest ships of war, and of so many gallant seamen, and which has inflicted upon their widows and other relatives losses which must be for ever deplored."

On the 13th of June the Prince of Wales, accompanied by her royal highness the Princess, opened the Thames Embankment. In the autumn the Queen gave her consent to the marriage of her fourth daughter, the Princess Louise. In the following spring, on the 21st March, the marriage was solemnised with great pomp at St. George's Chapel, Windsor. Considerable interest was excited in the alliance, because the bridegroom was not a prince, but bore the name of John George Edward Henry Douglas Sutherland Campbell, Marquis of Lorne. Her Majesty sanctioned the wedding by going to it in person; and many eyes grew dim

with tears as they looked upon the bride and the Queen-mother, as they passed in the royal carriage on their way to the chapel. The Princess seemed to look out on the people through a bower of orange blossoms; and their prayers for her were very hearty—"God bless her." All the family were present at the ceremony; even the two little children of the Prince and Princess of Wales, Prince George of Wales, and Prince Albert Victor, in Highland kilt, scarf, and sporran—cheery, bright boys, upon whom their mother's eyes looked gladly and lovingly as they marched in front of her, trying to be sufficiently solemn for the august occasion. It was noticed that the Queen was looking exceedingly well; and when the question was asked—"Who giveth this woman to be married to this man?" her Majesty replied that she did. The Princess spoke in very low tones the words "I, Princess Louise, take thee, John Douglas Sutherland, Marquis of Lorne," but she had a bright and happy face. The wedding breakfast was laid in the magnificent Oak Room, and about sixty guests were present. A quantity of white satin shoes, and a new broom, were thrown after the newly-married pair as they drove away—the latter in accordance with a very ancient Highland custom.

A few days later the Royal Albert Hall was opened; the Queen being present, and saying in a distinct voice—"I wish to express my great admiration of this beautiful hall, and my earnest wishes for its complete success." The hall had cost £200,000, and is capable of seating ten thousand persons. The opening was celebrated by a concert, at which a cantata by Sir Michael Costa was performed, the orchestra numbering nine hundred singers and nearly two hundred instruments.

The end of the year 1871 was made exceedingly sad and anxious to all the members of the royal family by the dangerous illness of the Prince of Wales. On the 23d of November the public learned that the Prince had been

unable to fulfil an engagement to visit the Maharajah Dhuleep Singh, on account of a feverish attack. A bulletin was issued, signed by Doctors Jenner, Gull, Clayton, and Lowe, which said that the Prince was suffering from typhoid fever, but that there were no unfavourable symptoms. The Queen, with Prince Leopold and Princess Beatrice, returned to Windsor from Balmoral on the twenty-fifth; and four days later, being alarmed by the accounts which reached her of the Prince's health, she started for Sandringham, the country residence of the Prince of Wales. The Prince's three elder children, and those of the Princess Louis of Hesse, who, with their mother, were at the time on a visit to Sandringham, were despatched to Windsor. The Princess Alice stayed with the Princess of Wales, to share her watchings and anxieties. At first the Prince seemed to get better; for the Marquis of Lorne, speaking at the Scottish Festival on the thirtieth, said—"I think I had better begin at once by telling you that which you all will be most anxious to hear—namely, about the health of the Prince of Wales. You will, I am sure, all be delighted to hear that the Prince has passed a quiet and favourable day. There cannot, of course, but be great anxiety produced by such an illness, but we have well-grounded hope that, with God's blessing, it will come to a favourable issue, seeing that his strength remains good, and that he has at length been able to take more rest. You all know that his royal highness is president of this Corporation, and you must remember the courtesy, and dignity, and kindness with which he presided at your festive meeting two years ago. I am sure you will mingle most fervent prayers with your cheers that the Princess of Wales may shortly see the Prince making a complete, speedy, and perfect recovery."

But on the 8th of December a serious relapse occurred, and it became known that the life of the Prince was in

imminent danger. The Queen, who had returned to Windsor, hurried back to Sandringham, the Duke of Edinburgh and the Princess Louise accompanying her. Prince Arthur arrived at midnight, and the other members of the royal family the next morning. Then followed a state of excitement and suspense such as cannot be imagined or described. The anxiety felt by the royal household was fully shared by the country. The papers were full of the Prince, and the people cared for nothing else. The *Pall Mall Gazette* of the ninth contained the following, which gives a description which might serve for the provinces as well as the metropolis:—"The excitement in London on the publication of the early editions of the evening papers yesterday afternoon was intense. Crowds of eager inquirers gathered round the various newspaper offices, as well as round the shops and stalls of the news-venders, and earnest conversations were carried on. At Marlborough House the telegrams were watched for by large numbers of persons, who remained standing on the pavement and out in the street, regardless of the piercing cold, and anxious only to learn the latest intelligence as speedily as possible. As might be expected, the excitement here became very great on the arrival of a telegram, and in a few minutes after the messenger had brought in the intelligence the door was opened and the people were admitted, and copies were distributed to the fortunate individuals who were enabled to get near the office. Some one or other of the recipients would then read the documents aloud to those who were waiting outside. Immediately on the receipt of one of these messages, a copy was despatched to the head-office of the Metropolitan Police, in Scotland Yard, and the intelligence was instantly telegraphed to every police-station within the metropolitan district. At all these stations there were numbers of persons waiting during the day, many of whom came from considerable distances, especially

• in the rural districts. From provincial towns we learn that equal anxiety was shown all over the country."

By the desire of the Queen the Archbishop of Canterbury issued the following forms of prayer, which were used on and after the tenth in all churches and chapels of the establishment:—"O, Almighty God and merciful Father, to whom alone belong the issues of life and death, look down from heaven, we humbly beseech Thee, with the eyes of mercy upon Albert Edward, Prince of Wales, now lying upon the bed of sickness. Thou Father of mercies and God of all comfort, our only help in time of need, we fly unto Thee for succour on behalf of Thy servant. Grant, O Lord, that all the sins of his past life may be done away, and his soul washed in the precious blood of Christ, that it may be pure and without spot before Thee. If it shall be Thy pleasure, prolong, we beseech Thee, his days here on earth, and grant that he may live to Thee, and be an instrument to Thy glory, and a blessing to our church and nation. Prepare him, O most loving Father, by Thy Holy Spirit, for all that lies before him, in life or in death; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen."

"Almighty and everlasting God, who guidest the hearts of kings, and who hast blessed and sanctified the bonds of love to knit together the members of all Christian families, look down, we beseech Thee, on Thy servants Victoria, our Queen, and the Princess of Wales, in this day of their great trouble, and on all the royal family. Comfort and support them in their present trial, and grant that their hearts may be stayed only upon Thee; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen."

Evidently the Queen has great faith in the power of prayer, and so have most of her subjects. Not only were these prayers offered in the churches of the establishment, but there was not a Nonconformist chapel that had not its special prayer-meeting on behalf of the Prince. Cardinal

Manning composed a special prayer to be used in all Roman Catholic places of worship ; and from all the synagogues of the Jews strains of supplication arose. There was not a family that did not pray for the Prince. Men of business and women of leisure thought of him at all hours, and prayed that for the sake of his widowed mother, and of his gentle wife, worn with watching, as well as for the nation, his life might be spared. On the day of the anniversary of his father's death the excitement of the people became almost uncontrollable, and when the next morning news came that he had passed a quiet night the joy and thankfulness of the people could only express themselves in tears. Nor was it England alone that was moved to sympathy. The telegraph took the news of every change to the farthest parts of the earth, and millions of people breathed more freely when the good news was circulated.

Boxing Day in England was one long to be remembered. The Prince was pronounced to be out of danger. That night at the theatres, notably at Drury Lane, the assembled crowds caught up, three times in succession, the air, "God bless the Prince of Wales," as the orchestra played it. On the same day her Majesty wrote a letter to her people:—"The Queen is very anxious to express her deep sense of the touching sympathy of the whole nation on the occasion of the alarming illness of her dear son, the Prince of Wales. The universal feeling shown by her people during those painful, terrible days, and the sympathy evinced by them with herself and her beloved daughter, the Princess of Wales, as well as the general joy in the improvement of the Prince of Wales's state, have made a deep and lasting impression on her heart, which can never be effaced." It was, indeed, nothing new to her, for the Queen had met with the same sympathy when, just ten years ago, a similar illness removed from her side the mainstay of her life, the best, wisest, and kindest of husbands.

“The Queen wishes to express, at the same time, on the part of the Princess of Wales, her feelings of heartfelt gratitude, for she has been as deeply touched as the Queen by the great and universal manifestation of loyalty and sympathy.

“The Queen cannot conclude without expressing her hope that her faithful subjects will continue their prayers to God for the complete recovery of her dear son to health and strength.”

The loyalty which so touched the Queen was all the more welcome, and perhaps all the more remarkable, because immediately before the illness of the Prince of Wales some people had been turning their attention to the cost of royalty. As usual, some of the statements made were utterly untrue, and some were grossly exaggerated; and the effect on the minds of a few of the people was the lessening of attachment towards the throne. But a complete reaction set in as soon as the life of the heir was in danger. It was then seen how intensely loyal is the heart of the nation to the royal family and the Queen.

And this was still further confirmed when, in the new year, the thanksgiving festival was held. The Queen intended little more than that a private service should be held by herself and the members of her household, but it was soon apparent that the people could not bear to be shut out from participating in the thanksgiving, which they, too, felt. As the day approached, the magnitude of the celebration grew, and it was seen that the thanksgiving service would be in truth a national festival. And so it proved. The streets were gaily decorated, and the pavements thronged, as the procession of royal carriages went on its way from Buckingham Palace to St. Paul's. Bands of school children sang hymns, and the people cheered and wept. The last of the nine carriages was an open one, and in it were the Queen, the Prince, and the Princess of Wales. Her Majesty

looked well, and very happy, and the face of the Princess was lighted with tender joy. The Prince looked pale, but his face was radiant, as he continually lifted his hat and bowed to the people. St. Paul's had been arranged to accommodate a congregation of thirteen thousand persons, and, of course, it was full. The royal family, the House of Lords, the House of Commons, the *Corps Diplomatique* and distinguished foreigners, the judges and dignitaries of the law, the Lords-Lieutenant and Sheriffs of counties, foreign princes and ambassadors—all were present.

The following special prayer was offered up during the service :—

“ Oh, Father of mercies and God of all comfort, we thank Thee that Thou hast heard the prayers of this nation in the day of our trial. We praise and magnify Thy glorious name, for that Thou hast raised Thy servant Albert Edward, Prince of Wales, from the bed of sickness. Thou castest down and Thou liftest up, and health and strength are Thy gifts ; we pray thee to perfect the recovery of Thy servant, and to crown him day by day with more abundant blessings, both for body and soul, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.”

After which the following anthem, the words of which are taken from the 118th Psalm, was sung by the full choir :—

“ The Lord is my strength and my song : and is become my salvation.

“ The voice of joy and health is in the dwellings of the righteous : and the right hand of the Lord bringeth mighty things to pass.

“ The right hand of the Lord hath the pre-eminence ; the right hand of the Lord bringeth mighty things to pass.

“ I shall not die, but live : and declare the works of the Lord.

“ The Lord hath chastened and corrected me : but He has not given me over unto death.

"Open me the gates of righteousness : that I may go into them, and give thanks unto the Lord.

"This is the gate of the Lord : the righteous shall enter into it.

"I will thank Thee, for Thou hast heard me : and art become my salvation.

"Thou art my God, and I will thank Thee : Thou art my God, and I will praise Thee.—Hallelujah, Amen."

An address was then delivered by the Archbishop of Canterbury, from the text, "Members one of another."

A hymn, written for the occasion by the Rev. J. S. Stone, was next sung to the tune of "Aurelia," from *Hymns Ancient and Modern*. The following is a copy :—

"Oh, Thou, our soul's salvation !
Our hope for earthly weal !
We who in tribulation
Did for Thy mercy kneel,
Lift up glad hearts before Thee,
And eyes no longer dim,
And for Thy grace adore Thee
In Eucharistic Hymn.

"Forth went the nation weeping,
With precious seed of prayer,
Hope's awful vigil keeping
Mid rumours of despair.
Then did Thy love deliver,
And from Thy gracious hand
Joy, like the Southern river,
O'erflowed the weary land.

"Bless Thou our adoration !
Our gladness sanctify !
Make this rejoicing nation
To Thee by joy more nigh.
Oh, be this great thanksgiving
Throughout the land we raise,
Wrought into holier living
In all our after days.

“ Bless, Father, him Thou gavest
Back to the loyal land ;
Oh, Saviour, him Thou savest
Still cover with Thy hand.
Oh, Spirit, the Defender,
Be his to guard and guide,
Now in life's mid-day splendour,
On to the even-tide ! Amen.”

The Prince did not seem too much fatigued as the procession returned, but he was able to come on the balcony at Buckingham Palace, and bow to the people his acknowledgments of the greetings he had received. The whole day was kept as a holiday, and it might truly be said that the heart of the nation was as one man.

The next evening an event occurred which alarmed the people more than it did her Majesty. She had been out for a drive and had returned, the carriage halting for her to descend, when a lad excitedly rushed to the left side, and held out a pistol in his right hand and a paper in his left. Suddenly he made a gesticulation of disappointment as if he had discovered that her Majesty was not on that side of the carriage, and he rushed round to the other side and held the pistol and the paper at the full stretch of his arms towards the royal occupant. Our Queen was quite calm and unmoved, and looked quietly on while some persons disarmed the lad of the pistol (which was loaded) and took him into custody.

The following letter from the Queen closed the history of the illness of the Prince of Wales. “The Queen is anxious, as on a previous occasion, to express publicly her *own* personal and *very deep* sense of the reception she and her dear children met with on Tuesday, 27th February, from millions of her subjects, on her way to and from St. Paul's. Words are too weak for the Queen to say how very touched and gratified she has been by the immense enthusiasm and affection exhibited towards her dear son

and herself, from the highest down to the lowest, on the long procession through the capital; and she would earnestly wish to convey her warmest and most heartfelt thanks to the whole nation for this great demonstration of loyalty.

“The Queen, as well as her son and her dear daughter-in-law, felt that the whole nation joined with them in thanking God for sparing the beloved Prince of Wales’s life.

“The remembrance of this day, and of the remarkable order maintained throughout, will for ever be affectionately remembered by the Queen and her family.”





CHAPTER XXIV.

The Weather Year.

“Now pray we for our country,
That England long may be
The holy and the happy,
And the gloriously free.”

THE year 1872, which began so auspiciously for our Queen and her family, was sometimes called the “Weather Year;” for there were many storms and floods to make it remarkable. At its entrance it was marked by heavy thunderstorms, such as usually come only in the summer; and these were followed by violent snowstorms, and these again by floods. Otherwise the year was comparatively quiet; England was at peace, and commercial prospects were fairly good. The Queen’s Speech reminded the nation that “the arbitrators appointed pursuant to the Treaty of Washington, for the purpose of amicably settling certain claims known as the Alabama claims, have held their first meeting at Geneva;” and said that Ireland, with very few exceptions, had been free from serious crime. It was during this year that the

Ballot Act was passed; also the Licensing Act. Other events of the year were the Builders' Strike, the Belfast Riots, and the murder of Lord Mayo, the governor-general of India.

On the 24th of June the Prince and Princess of Wales visited the East of London for the purpose of opening the Bethnal Green Museum. The people expressed their loyalty in various devices, such as "Welcome to the East," "Long wished for come at last," "Thank you for your kind visit." Mrs. Gladstone introduced a pretty little lady to the Princess, who presented her royal highness with a bouquet. Rather an amusing incident occurred at the opening service. The Bishop of London having read the special prayer closed his manuscript and commenced the Lord's Prayer, when the conductor of the choir, who could not hear, concluded the prayers were over, and gave the sign to commence the Old Hundredth Psalm, and the bishop's voice was drowned by a burst of children's voices and kettledrums.

In the following month the Princess of Wales, accompanied by the Prince, laid the foundation-stone of the Children's Hospital in Great Ormond Street.

Great anxiety had been felt for the last year or two as to the fate of Dr. Livingstone, the great African missionary and discoverer, but on the 3d of November 1871, Mr. Stanley, a young correspondent of the *New York Herald*, found him. On the 27th of August Earl Granville addressed this letter to Mr. Stanley:—"Sir—I have great satisfaction in conveying to you, by command of the Queen, her Majesty's high appreciation of the prudence and zeal which you have displayed in opening a communication with Dr. Livingstone, relieving her Majesty from the anxiety which, in common with her subjects, she had felt in regard to the fate of that distinguished traveller. The Queen desires me to express her thanks for the service you

have thus rendered, together with her Majesty's congratulations on your having so successfully carried out the mission which you so fearlessly undertook. Her Majesty also desires me to request your acceptance of the memorial which accompanies this letter." The present from the Queen, sent with the letter, was a gold snuff-box set with diamonds.

On the 23d of September news reached the Queen that her beloved sister, the Dowager-Princess of Hohenlohe Langenburg, had died at Baden Baden. It was a painful shock to her Majesty, for she had loved her sister and been loved by her with very warm affection. The Duke of Edinburgh, Prince Arthur, the Princess Alice, and her husband went to Baden Baden to attend the funeral.

No one was sorry when the year of storms had ended, and every one hoped the best of the new year. Eighteen hundred and seventy-three, however, came in rather gloomily, with a strike among the ironworkers of South Wales, and a great scarcity of coal, which, as it was sold only at famine prices, caused great suffering among the poor.

The first event of interest in England was the death of the Emperor Napoleon. Since the time when, having handed his sword to the Emperor of Germany in token of his defeat, he had come over to find refuge in England, he had lived quietly at Camden Place, Chiselhurst. Although it was known that he was suffering from disease, it was not suspected that the end was near until less than an hour before he died. The Prince Imperial was at the Royal Academy, Woolwich, when he was summoned home; he did not arrive in time to see his father alive. The lying-in-state of the Emperor was witnessed by thirty thousand persons; and the greatest sympathy with the Empress and her son was manifested. The Prince of Wales, the Duke of Edinburgh, and Prince Christian, joined the Princes of the House of Bonaparte in paying their respect to the memory of the

Emperor; and the Queen, as well as other Courts, sent expressions of sympathy to the widow and orphan. The Emperor was buried in St. Mary's Church, about two thousand Frenchmen being among the forty thousand people assembled on the occasion. It was remarkable that in Paris no one seemed to take the least notice of the event. The people who, but a few years back, had hailed his appearance with shouts of enthusiasm, or shrunk away from him with detestation, scarcely took the trouble to tell each other of his death. So much for human greatness and popularity!

Before January had passed the country was thrilled with sorrow at the news that the *Northfleet*, a large outward-bound emigrant ship, with four hundred persons on board, had gone to the bottom of the sea. Only a few were saved. Many homes were plunged into grief; but as usual the country did what it could, by promptly subscribing several thousand pounds for the suffering and survivors, the Queen herself contributing £200. The wreck of the *Atlantic* occurred, too, soon after, and was even more disastrous in its consequences than that of the *Northfleet*, for the former vessel had on board thirty-two saloon, and six hundred and fifteen steerage passengers, all bound for New York.

In April the Queen visited the park which the people had called after her name in the east end of London, and never before or since has Victoria Park looked so gay. The Queen was in good health, and appeared happy to see her subjects. But, in the following month, an accident occurred which brought sorrow to the heart of her Majesty, especially on account of her daughter the Princess Alice. The little Prince Frederick William of Hesse had been brought into the Princess Alice's bedroom, with the other royal children, early in the morning to see their mother; and while they were all playing together, the boy, Prince Ernest, ran into a bath-room which opened out of the bed-room. The Princess

Alice, knowing that the bath-room window was open, hastily got up and followed to bring him back. At that moment the other boy, Frederick, went to the bed-room window, which was also open, and let a toy with which he was playing drop. In trying to recover the lost treasure the little fellow fell out of the window, a depth of twenty feet to the ground below. The Princess hearing a noise, rushed back, but was only in time to see the poor child in the air, and to hear the heart-breaking sound of his fall. Her shrieks brought immediate assistance, but the little one died an hour or two after the accident. It was an awful trouble to his mother, who had greatly loved the child, who had never been strong, and had, therefore, appealed strongly to her motherly sympathies. The Princess Imperial of Germany went at once to her sister, and their mother in England sent long letters of condolence to the sorrowing parents.

The Shah of Persia came to England in June, in accordance with a kind invitation sent by the Queen, and was received by her Majesty in state at Windsor, and entertained with all honour and courtesy. Dean Stanley conducted him through Westminster Abbey, Mr. Gladstone invited him to a fashionable afternoon party, the Lord Mayor entertained him at a magnificent banquet given to three thousand guests in the Guildhall, and the Prince of Wales, with his usual courtesy, did all that could be thought of to make the visit a pleasant one.

The remarkable Tichborne trial occupied much of the attention of the public during the year; which, however, was also more painfully excited by the terrible railway accidents which occurred almost every month, and the year ended with a fog of most remarkable density, which lasted three days, and caused great injury to human life as well as to a number of animals which were then on exhibition at the cattle show.

The first event of the new year was the marriage of the

Queen's second son, Prince Alfred, the Duke of Edinburgh, with the Grand Duchess Marie Alexandrovna, only daughter of the Emperor and Empress of Russia. The marriage was solemnised with the utmost pomp at the Winter Gardens, St. Petersburg, and was performed in accordance with the rites of both the Orthodox and Anglican churches. Viscount Sydney and the Lady Augusta Stanley represented our Queen; and the Protestant service was performed by the very Rev. Dean Stanley. The Duke and the Grand Duchess used prayer books which had been sent them by the Queen, and the Bride's bouquet was also her Majesty's present from Osborne. The Greek Church allows no instrumental music, but the singing of the Russian choir was magnificent. The marriage register was signed by Dean Stanley, the Emperor and Empress of Russia, the Prince and Princess of Wales, Prince Arthur, the Imperial Crown Prince and Crown Princess of Germany, and several members of the Imperial Family.

There had been a little dissatisfaction in the minds of some of the English people in reference to certain acts of the Emperor of Russia, but all this was forgotten when the nation was called upon to welcome his daughter as the bride of one of our Princes. She landed at Gravesend on Saturday, the 7th March, and the people gave to her a reception that was not only respectful and cordial, but magnificent. The royal pair went at once to Windsor, where the Queen received her new daughter with kindly affection. A few days later the state entry of the Duke and Duchess into London was a most imposing scene. The weather must have reminded the Grand Duchess of that of her own country, for the frost was the most severe of the winter; and a heavy snow-storm, which commenced in the morning, lasted all day. One of the spectators declared that it made the country look like "one vast bride-cake." But the snow was not allowed to interfere with the day's proceedings, for

the people thronged the windows, and balconies, and house-tops, and streets for many hours, and the Queen and the royal couple and Princess Beatrice braved the elements in an open landau, and smilingly acknowledged the greeting that was everywhere given.

For some time past Sir Garnet Wolsley had commanded our army in the Ashantee war; and on the 30th of March the Queen reviewed the return troops in Windsor Great Park. Her Majesty, in an open carriage drawn by four ponies, was accompanied by the Princess of Wales, the Duchess of Edinburgh, and Princess Christian. Princess Louise (Marchioness of Lorne), Princess Beatrice, and Prince Leopold were in another carriage. The Queen drove slowly down the lines smiling upon the men; and afterwards asked Sir Garnet to thank them for their services. She herself complimented and congratulated the commander-in-chief; and with her own hand fastened the Victoria Cross upon the breast of a young lieutenant, Lord Gifford, who had especially distinguished himself for bravery.

It is known that our Queen has taken a great interest in kindness to animals. The following letter tells its own story:—

“My dear Lord—The Queen has commanded me to address you as President of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, on the occasion of the assembly in this country of the foreign delegates connected with your association and of the jubilee of the society, to request you to give expression publicly to her Majesty’s warm interest in the success of the efforts which are being made at home and abroad for the purpose of diminishing the cruelties practised on dumb animals. The Queen reads and hears with horror of the sufferings which the brute creation often undergo from the thoughtlessness of the ignorant, and she fears also sometimes from experiments in the pursuit of science. For the removal of the former the Queen trusts

much to the progress of education, and in regard to the pursuit of science she hopes that the entire advantage of those anæsthetic discoveries from which man has derived so much benefit himself in the alleviation of suffering may be fully extended to the lower animals. Her Majesty rejoices that the society awakens the interest of the young by the presentation of prizes for essays connected with the subject, and hears with gratification that her son and daughter-in-law have shown their interest by distributing the prizes. Her Majesty begs to announce a donation of £100 to the funds of the society."

On the 13th of May the Czar of Russia came to England on a visit to his daughter, the Duchess of Edinburgh, and stayed until the twenty-first. In any case his Majesty would have been royally received and entertained, but coming as he did with the memory of the marriage of his daughter and her welcome to England fresh in the minds of the people, he was greeted with the greatest enthusiasm. No ceremony likely to enhance the pleasure of his visit was omitted, and although his stay was not a long one, every day was filled with some attraction. It must have been a great pleasure to the father and daughter to meet again, and a comfort to the Czar to discover the friendliness with which she was regarded in England. His last speech, made at a banquet in the Guildhall, was as follows:—"My Lord Mayor and citizens of London—I feel most grateful for your hospitality and cordial reception. On my own part I can assure you that I have a firm reliance on your good feeling towards my beloved daughter, whose domestic happiness I have so much at heart. I trust that, with the blessing of divine Providence, the affectionate home she finds in your country will strengthen the friendly relations now established between Russia and Great Britain, to the mutual advantage of their prosperity and peace."

One event of the year which excited considerable feeling

was the funeral of the great good man who has been already referred to—Dr. Livingstone. The news of his death came too soon after the joyous intelligence of Stanley's meeting with him, and when people heard of it they could but exclaim, "Oh, if he had but returned with Stanley!" But Livingstone would not leave his work unfinished, and so he had toiled in loneliness and weakness until, on the last night of April 1873, he was found kneeling by the side of the bed with his face in his hands—dead. The English people were able, through the faithfulness and perseverance of the doctor's servants who loved him, to gratify their feelings of admiration and sorrow by according him a public funeral. His body was brought over to England, and on the 18th of April 1874 the man who had begun life as a little piecer boy in a factory was carried through ranks of thousands of reverent and moved spectators to rest in Westminster Abbey.





CHAPTER XXV

The Prince of Wales in India.

“ Though far away thy mother’s splendour streams,
These distant realms are gladdened by the beams.”

ONE of the first things which the Queen did at the beginning of the year 1875 was to erect an altar-tomb to the memory of her father, which was placed in the south aisle at the west end of St George’s Chapel, Windsor. She made her usual new year’s presents to the poor of Windsor, Holy Trinity, and Clewes. There were seven hundred and ninety-nine recipients, and among them the Queen gave 56 tons of coal and 3064 lbs. of beef. The year began with some anxiety to the Queen, for Prince Leopold was suffering from an attack of typhoid fever, said to have been caught at Oxford from bad drainage. After the fever had left him hæmorrhage of the lungs set in, which weakened him considerably. He had never been strong from his birth, and this had prevented him from appearing in public as often as his brothers; but the sympathy of the people during his illness was manifested in many ways; they knew that he had lived a quiet life of

study at Oxford, that he was of a literary turn of mind, and musical; and it was hoped that he would live to be a comfort to his mother, and to reproduce in his own life some of the excellencies that graced his father. There was, therefore, sincere, if quiet, rejoicing when it was known early in February that the Prince was better. He, himself, on his recovery, sent donations of £50 each to the University College Hospital, and the Hospital for Sick Children in Great Ormond Street.

In consequence of the illness of her son, the Queen spent the greater part of the year in retirement, the Princess of Wales performing some public duties, such as launching the steam-ship *Alexandra*, and opening the Convalescent Home, Norbiton. The Princess Louise, too, took part in interesting ceremonies, such as laying the foundation-stone of a new chapel for the inmates of the Kensington Workhouse. The Prince of Wales was present at a dinner given in honour of her Majesty's birthday by Mr. Disraeli, and he opened a branch building of the Deaf and Dumb Asylum. The Duke of Edinburgh presided at the annual meeting of the Lifeboat Institution, and opened the Yorkshire Exhibition of Arts and Sciences at Leeds. One interesting incident in connection with the latter service was that as the Duke's carriage passed through the streets thirty-five thousand children sang the National Anthem. In August the Prince and Princess of Wales visited Sheffield to open the park which Mr. Mark Firth had presented to the town. Before he left the Prince said—"It has been said, ladies and gentlemen, that Sheffield was democratic, but after what we have seen to-day and yesterday, I think its worst enemies would not give it that appellation. It will be my great pleasure in a few days to tell her Majesty the Queen how strong the devotion of this town is towards her person and her throne, as has been manifested by the kind and affectionate feeling shown towards us."

The Queen, amidst all her journeys, has seldom met with an accident, but one occurred when this year she was crossing the Solent to start for Balmoral, which had serious consequences. The *Alberta* came into collision with the *Mistletoe*, a schooner yacht belonging to Mr. Hayward of Manchester. One lady and the mate of the *Mistletoe* were drowned. The accident caused the Queen the keenest distress.

The year 1875 was one of great quietness and peace. The Duke and Duchess of Edinburgh went to St. Petersburg on a visit. Messrs. Moody and Sankey were in London holding large and successful revival meetings, and the Arctic Expedition had gone out. But toward the end of the year the country was stirred with excitement by the departure of the Prince of Wales for India. This journey had been long contemplated; and at length, on a fine day in October, the Dukes of Edinburgh, Connaught, Teck, and Cambridge, Prince Christian, Princess Louise, and the Marquis of Lorne, and a number of court notabilities, assembled to witness his departure and wish him God-speed. The Princess of Wales accompanied him as far as Calais, and then returned to her home, where later she received her father and mother, who came to make a long stay with her during the absence of the Prince. The story of the visit of his royal highness to India is like an Arabian Night's tale, so full of splendour, magnificence, and entertainment is it. As soon as he arrived in Cairo, the Prince held an investiture of the Star of India, the power to do so having been conferred upon him by her Majesty. He then rejoined the *Serapis* at Suez, and went down the Red Sea to Aden, which he reached on the 1st of November, and where he was received with every demonstration of welcome and delight. From thence he went to Bombay, where the road was lined with people—two hundred thousand at least being present. The whole city was splendidly decorated, and the Prince appeared greatly pleased with his reception.

His royal highness spent his thirty-fourth birthday at Bombay, and salutes of artillery were fired in his honour all over India. It was evident that the people delighted to honour the son of the good Queen Victoria. Nor were the English people less loyal. Although he was absent, perhaps partly because of his absence, the festivities at Sandringham were of a very joyful character, more especially as the news arrived that day of the landing and reception of the Prince at Bombay. The Princess had taken care that her husband's birthday, though spent in a foreign land, should be made the happier by a token of her love. When he came into his room in the morning, a beautiful portrait of his wife greeted him, which she had sent over in the care of some one who was in the secret, and who had faithfully carried out her wishes that the present should surprise the Prince at the right time. It must have greatly enhanced the Prince's pleasure to be thus reminded of his loving wife at home, whose thoughts and prayers, he knew, would follow him all the way.

On the 12th of November he went with a party of four hundred ladies and gentlemen to visit the famous caves of Elephantee. At Baroda, he, and ten Indian friends, rode on an elephant gaily caparisoned. At Madras he joined an elephant hunt, and himself shot an elephant. A gentleman presented him with a four-in-hand of antelopes; and a beautiful sight was prepared for him—the surf, which is very high on that shore, being illuminated. The Prince ate his Christmas dinner that year in great state in Calcutta. He attended divine service in the morning, and dined with the Viceroy in the evening. On New Year's Day 1876, he unveiled a statue of Lord Mayo. At Lucknow he laid the foundation-stone of a memorial of the native defence of the Residency during the Mutiny of 1857; the survivors of the faithful band passing in review before him. Delhi was next visited, and here his royal highness held a grand

review. Then he went to Lahore, and from thence paid a visit to the Maharajah of Cashmere, at Jummoo. At Wuzeerabad he opened the "Alexandra" bridge. He stayed several days at Agra; and the Maharajah of Jeypore entertained him with a tiger hunt, at which the Prince shot his first tiger. On the 5th March he returned to British territory, and on the thirteenth he set sail for home. At Gibraltar he was joined by his brother, the Duke of Connaught. On the 11th of May the Princess of Wales, with her children, went on board the *Enchantress* to give the Prince his first welcome home. When he appeared, leading the Princess down the gangway of the *Serapis* to the jetty at Portsmouth, shouts of greeting reached him from thousands of people. Sir Julius Benedict had composed some music for the occasion, and when the Prince had listened to it, and received an address, he started for London. The Princess Louise, and the Marquis of Lorne, and a crowd of distinguished persons met him at the Victoria station, and Westminster gave him a most enthusiastic welcome. He went to the opera that night, the Princess at his side, and his two sons holding his hands, and the cheering was overwhelming. Altogether, though he had seen sights, grand and many, and had curious presents to show as trophies of his visit, he must have felt that there was no place like home.

That year the Queen, accompanied by the Princess of Wales and the Princess Beatrice, went in state to Westminster to open Parliament. In March she opened a new wing of the London Hospital. She spoke very graciously on the occasion. "Situated as the London Hospital is, in the midst of the poorest classes of the metropolis, the addition of a wing was an event of very great importance to the sick and suffering of its neighbourhood; and when I remember that instead of the eight hundred beds which this hospital will now contain, adequate provision did not

exist for four hundred patients previous to the opening of the Alexandra wing by the Prince and Princess of Wales less than twelve years since, I sincerely congratulate his royal highness the President (the Duke of Cambridge), the governors, and the staff of so eminently successful an institution on the completion of this further proof of their zeal and efficiency. It has given me great pleasure to visit the East End of London, and I shall always remember with much satisfaction that I was enabled to open the Grocers' Company's wing of the London Hospital."

The people were not less glad to see their Queen than she was to see them. The decorations were very profuse; and from the people her Majesty received an ovation that greatly delighted her.

On the 1st of May was made the proclamation of the Empress of India, an addition to the titles of our Queen, which renders her no greater in the eyes of her people, though loyal congratulations were sent to her from hundreds of places and corporate bodies.

The Premier, Mr. Disraeli, was, on the 18th of August, raised to the peerage as Lord Beaconsfield. He had served his Queen most loyally for many years; and it was hoped that his comparative retirement from public life would lengthen their number.

The opening days of November were made interesting by the return of the gallant Arctic explorers. Some of them had died, and all had greatly suffered. As usual, her Majesty had some gracious words for them:—"The Queen highly appreciates the valuable services rendered by them in the late Arctic expedition, and her Majesty fully sympathises in the hardships and sufferings they have endured, and laments the loss of life which has occurred. The Queen further directs that her thanks should be conveyed to the gallant men for what they have accomplished."



CHAPTER XXVI.

Death of the Princess Alice.

“Tender and true, whose virtue was thy crown,
Whose royalty was royally to live—
Death, sent to strike thee, laid his arrow down,
And prayed that Love the bitter call would give ;
But Love, who could not stay such precious breath,
Whispered thy child to give the kiss of death.”

THE first day of the New Year 1877 witnessed the proclamation of Queen Victoria as Empress of India, at Calcutta, Bombay, Madras, and Delhi. The proclamation was made in English, Bengali, and Hindustani. Some prisoners were set free, and there was general rejoicing in all the towns, especially in Delhi, where Lord Lytton, the Viceroy, presided at a magnificent assemblage, including sixty-three ruling chiefs. In England the Eastern question was occupying all minds, and it was one requiring all the wisdom of our statesmen.

The Queen opened the fourth session of her ninth Parliament in person on the 2d of February. It was the fifth time

since the death of her husband that she had herself been to Westminster, and the event excited more than common interest. She was accompanied by her family. The day was fine, and an unusual number of her Majesty's subjects lined the streets. During the year a great deal was heard about Irish obstruction, and Home Rule, and Irish bills. The war against intemperance went on, the Oxford and Cambridge Universities Bill was passed. There was a remarkably "long sitting" of Parliament, in order to consider the South African Confederation Bill. Then followed the annexation of the Transvaal. The British troops encamped on Transvaal territory on the 19th of April, and among the rest to welcome them was an old woman of eighty, who declared that she had received a prophecy in her girlhood that she would live to see the British troops. There was a bad famine in India that year. At one time two millions and a half of people were existing on gratuitous relief.

That year there were many disputes among churchmen of various views in England. "One of the worst features among churchmen now," said the Archbishop of Canterbury, "is that a certain section among ourselves think there should be no Established Church." But there were other things for the leaders of the people to think of, which, for the time, shut out all the rest, for as the year drew to a close wars and rumours of wars became the order of the day.

In the meantime our Queen was, as usual, quietly busy. In February she received from the Empress of Brazil a very remarkable present. It was a spider dress, a dress woven of spiders' webs, and so beautiful that the handsomest silk could not compare with it. Many attempts had been made to utilise the threads spun by spiders, but this was the first attempt that succeeded. Another present which had been made to England sixty years before was safely brought over

this year—that was the obelisk of ancient Egypt, Cleopatra's Needle. The Queen herself made a little present to three ladies—the Misses Defoe, descendants of the author of *Robinson Crusoe*, who each received, in accordance with her Majesty's expressed wish, £75 per annum. The Queen also commanded Lord Aberdare to present medals to the brave men who had risked their lives in rescuing their fellows, when an eruption of water in the Troedyrhin Colliery had taken place. In order to rescue the men it was resolved to cut through the coal. We give the story as it appeared in the chronicle of the year:—"The work of cutting through the coal was continued till Friday afternoon, when the two brave men who were the last to cut the coal were Abraham Todd ('Happy Todd') and Isaac Pride. The latter actually struck the hole through, the last blow by which the poor men were liberated. Todd, without hesitation, jumped in, and the size of the hole having been increased, Pride got in and joined his comrade. Their account of the release of the five men is interesting and pathetic. Three of the famishing men were standing, but two others, John Thomas and David Jenkins, were sitting on some coal. Todd first called out, saying that he was coming, so that, as he added, he should not frighten them by his sudden entrance. George Jenkins, he says, replied, 'All right, Todd.' To give the narrative in his own words:—

"Then I asked them, 'Where are you? for I had no light, the managers having refused to give us lamps. George Jenkins then came on to me and caught hold of me, and I then felt his arms around my neck, and he kissed me repeatedly. When he left me Moses Powell did the same. I asked where the other men were, and they replied, 'Behind.' I then called my buttty. I asked Pride to come in, which he did. I then went to where John Thomas was, and I caught hold of him. He was sitting down on a lump of coal, apparently lifeless, with his head hanging down. I

said to him, 'John, don't you know me?' and he said, 'Yes;' and that was all I heard him speak."

Four of the brave rescuers received the medal of the first class—namely, the Albert Medal, for their services.

Our Queen has always been generous to the people, and a proof of it may be cited. She set apart £10,000 of the money which had come to her as Duchess of Lancaster for a people's park in Heywood.

The year 1878 was one of the sad years for our Queen and her family. It opened inauspiciously with storms and shipwrecks. Early in January King Victor Emmanuel of Italy died. There was great war excitement in London, and it was then that the war party was first described as the Jingoos—a name which owed itself to a music-hall chorus—

"We don't want to fight, but by jingo if we do,

We've got the men, we've got the guns, we've got the money too."

In March occurred the awful disaster to H.M.S. *Eurydice*, one of the training ships, which foundered off Ventnor during a terrific snowstorm. Only two of the three hundred on board were saved. All the country was filled with grief, and the Queen promptly sent two telegrams:—"The Queen is deeply grieved to hear of the loss of the *Eurydice*. Her Majesty anxiously asks for further details:"—"The Queen would ask Mr. Smith to make known her grief at the terrible calamity of the *Eurydice*, and her heartfelt sympathy with the afflicted friends and relatives." These were no unmeaning phrases; the tears of her Majesty always flow with those of her subjects. A little incident is told in the *Annual Register* which will give some idea of the sorrow felt in many homes:—"That the men of the *Eurydice* lying dead in the waste of waters have left troops of attentive friends behind them to mourn their tragic fate has been touchingly proved. One day more than a thousand letters addressed to men on board the ship passed

through the returned letter office. They were sent on from Bermuda, marked 'Sailed for England,' and redirected to Portsmouth. There they arrived three days after the anxious spirits who had been waiting for news from home had gone to their last rest, and were sent back to the general post-office, ominously stamped with the words 'Ship foundered.'"

Her Majesty lost a personal friend a few months later when Earl Russell died, having nearly completed his eighty-sixth year. After a long political life, spent in stir and work, in arduous struggle and memorable public services, he enjoyed an honoured old age of domestic love and peace. The Queen sent a wreath to be placed on the coffin, to which were attached the words—"A mark of regard from Queen Victoria."

On the 28th of June the Prince and Princess of Wales were present to present prizes to the scholars of the Infant Orphan Asylum at Wanstead, which then held its fifty-first anniversary festival. It was made especially interesting by the speech of a little Danish girl, seven years of age :—"Your royal highness will perhaps allow me, in the name of my school-fellows, to say how proud and grateful we feel at your taking the trouble to come all the way from London to see us to-day, and I think the reason must be that, although your royal highnesses have seen a great many of the most beautiful things in the world, you will feel that a school in which there are nearly six hundred children (many of them little children too) is not beneath your kind notice. I have been told that there are other asylums of the same kind in England, but this is the very largest of all, and I hope we are not wrong in thinking that it is the very best of all—(laughter)—and when boys and girls, officers and servants, are all at home, nearly seven hundred persons sleep in this building every night. The schools are in three divisions, which we call senior, infant,

and nursery children, and in the two large senior schools there are about four hundred boys and girls. They learn grammar, history, geography, arithmetic, French, music, and drawing, and the girls needlework besides. In the two infant schools, I am very glad to say, we do not learn quite so much—(laughter)—and in the nursery they learn just a very little, and I think they play a good deal—(laughter). Of course every one of us is taught a little about the Bible, about this world and the next, and about the Lord Jesus Christ. The children who are here have come from all parts of the world—from Europe, Asia, Africa, America, and Australia—and some have come here as little babies not able to walk, and who have never known what it is to put their arms round their father's neck and kiss him, and tell him how they loved him. Perhaps your royal highnesses will forgive my boldness in saying that my father came from Denmark, and that my name is Dagmar Petersen, and I cannot mention that without saying that the kind lady who put me here did so on account of her love and respect for your royal highness the Princess, to whom, therefore, I owe my deepest thanks. I have heard, too, that one of my school-fellows in the senior girls' school was placed in the asylum a long time ago by his royal highness the Prince of Wales, and that she is the third child whom his royal highness has sent here." After asking the Prince to accept the humble thanks and loyal love of the children, the youthful speaker concluded by saying—"The day we have longed for (I cannot say how much) has come at last, and we shall pray with all our hearts, 'God bless the Prince and Princess of Wales.'"

On the 3d of September one of the most fearful disasters of modern times occurred on the Thames, when the steamship the *Princess Alice*, with more than seven hundred persons on board, came into collision with the *Bywell Castle*, and immediately plunged into the water, the shrieks of the

people being heartrending. Other vessels were near, and what could be done was done to save life, but more than six hundred persons were drowned. Everything seemed to combine to make the event painful. The excursionists were returning from a day of harmless pleasure—some Sunday-school teachers and their classes among them—and whole families taking their enjoyment together, were together, in two or three minutes, sent to their death. The entire land mourned ; there were thousands who had lost relatives or friends.

And before the shock of this trouble had passed away there came another, occasioned by the great colliery explosion at Abercarne, in South Wales, by which two hundred and sixty-two men were killed.

It was, indeed, a gloomy time for the Queen. She was called to part with her daughter, the Princess Louise, who, with her husband, the Marquis of Lorne, left England for Canada in November, the Marquis being appointed the Governor-General of that country. On the 5th of December the Queen summoned Parliament for a short session, and for a sad reason:—"The hostility towards my Indian Government, manifested by the Ameer of Afghanistan, and the manner in which he repulsed my friendly mission, left me no alternative but to make a peremptory demand for redress." The declaration of war had, in fact, been made already.

But the great trouble of the year came to the Queen on that strangely fatal day, the 14th of December. On that day, seventeen years before, her beloved husband died ; on that day, seven years before, her son, the heir to the throne, was lying, as it seemed, on the very point of death ; and on this day the Princess Alice—the first of her Majesty's children to be taken from her—died.

The Princess, with her husband, the Grand Duke of Hesse-Darmstadt, and their children, spent some weeks in

the autumn at Eastbourne. While there the Princess, without stating her rank, endeavoured to discover the manner of the working of several charitable institutions, notably that of the Charity Organisation Society; and interested herself in many ways of doing good, hoping that on her return to the German Fatherland she might put the lessons she had learned into practice. She was in England when the catastrophe to the ship which bore her name occurred, and she sent a message of sympathy to the sorrowing relatives, and a contribution to the fund.

On their return to Darmstadt, apparently in perfect health, the fatal disease—diphtheria—made its appearance in the ducal palace. On the 6th of November the Princess Victoria Alberta, then in her sixteenth year, was attacked. Five days afterwards her little sister, Princess Alice, succumbed. Then were prostrated in rapid succession Princess Marie, aged four, Princess Irene, aged twelve, the Hereditary Grand Duke, aged ten, and the Grand Duke himself. The Princess nursed them in turn with motherly care, and all recovered except the Princess Marie, whose case from the first had been so exceedingly severe that but little hope was entertained of her recovery. She died on the 16th of November, and it was hoped that the hand of death would then be stayed. It was a most anxious time for the Princess, for the rest of the family were so ill that it was not safe to tell them of the death of the little one, and for several days the Princess bore the burden of the secret. At last she broke the news first to one and then the other. Her husband was distressed to hear of his loss; but the eldest son was so overcome with sorrow that the Princess threw her arms around him and kissed him for comfort. It was the kiss of death. Sir William Jenner, who had been sent over by the Queen, and the other medical attendants, had warned her that she must not kiss her patients; for the danger of inhaling their breath would be great; but in her

anxiety for her boy she forgot her own safety, and thought only of lightening the blow of sorrow that had fallen upon him. Doubtless there was in the state of the Princess a predisposition to the disease. She was worn with watching and anxiety, and speedily fell a victim. The news of her illness created the greatest consternation. She had everywhere won golden opinions and real affection. She was so courteous, so good, so affable to everyone, that all with whom she had come into contact, either in England or Germany, loved her. Stories of her pleasant demeanour and excellent character were told from one to another. The following is one of them :—

“An English lady of high position residing at Darmstadt received a note from the Princess, saying that she would call and take a cup of tea with her the following afternoon. Scarlet cloth, as etiquette seemed to demand, was laid down, and a man was sent to the top of the house to watch for the royal carriage, and give due notice of its approach, so that the Princess might be received at the entrance with all due honours. But up to the time named by the Princess no carriage of any kind had come in sight. Suddenly a ring at the street door was heard, and a lady attired in a waterproof, and wearing goloshes, made her appearance. ‘I have made a point,’ she said, ‘of not treading on your beautiful scarlet cloth;’ and she intimated that in future she should be glad to be received, not as a princess making a state visit, but as a private lady, ‘dropping in’ upon a friend.”

Every one prayed and hoped that she would not die; and the hope grew stronger as it was remembered that the disease had only proved fatal in one case. The accounts received by the Queen were favourable; but a rapid change for the worse occurred, and early on Saturday morning her Majesty received a telegram to the effect that her beloved daughter was dead. The *Court Circular*, in announcing the sad intelligence, said—

"Stricken by the sudden bereavement and the loss of a favourite daughter, the grief of her Majesty was immeasurable, and it was fortunate that in the hour of this great trial the Prince and Princess of Wales, Princess Beatrice, and Prince Leopold were at hand to sustain and comfort their mother. The Prince and Princess of Wales and Prince Leopold had come to the castle on Friday evening, for the purpose of attending the memorial service which was to be held on Saturday at the royal mausoleum at Frogmore, upon the occasion of the seventeenth anniversary of the death of the Prince Consort. The Hon. and Very Rev. Gerald Wellesley, dean of Windsor, was to have officiated at this ceremonial. The usual preparations were made, but at the last moment the Queen, borne down by grief at the critical condition of the Grand Duchess, and feeling that under the circumstances the service was one too painful to attend, postponed the observance of the anniversary to a more suitable moment."

Manifestations of grief were everywhere ; the flags were lowered, blinds drawn, and the sorrow of people of all lands was very real. The body of the Princess was interred in the mausoleum at Rosenhohe on the eighteenth. The funeral solemnities commenced on the night before, when the remains were removed by torch-light from the Grand Ducal Palace at Darmstadt to the church in the old castle. Every demonstration of respect was manifested by the thousands of spectators who lined the streets. An account of what had occurred previously is given in a touching tribute to the memory of the Princess Alice, which appeared in the *Darmstadter Zeitung*, dated Christmas Eve, and bearing the title, "A Watcher by the Dead ;" and describes the scene witnessed in the great hall at Darmstadt before the funeral :—

"Long, long before daybreak, on one of those gloomy December days of last week, an officer made his way

hurriedly along the silent, empty streets of the capital. He was in full uniform, but its pomp and splendour were shrouded in a thick covering of crape, for he was afoot thus early to do duty by the bier of the beloved Princess. Desolate were the streets as of a city of the dead—desolate as though tenanted only by the dead was the lordly palace to which he bent his steps. The sentinels at the great gate stood motionless, despite the severe cold, as if they feared to disturb the repose of the dead. Here, where the inhabitants of the capital used to see all astir with the busy, cheerful life inseparable from the residence of a reigning Prince; here, where in days but recently gone by, children, blooming and beautiful, the country's pride and the joy of their princely parents, gave animation to house and garden, all was silent and void; a deadly blast had swept over the till now so happy home. The country's young, idolised mother had closed her beautiful eyes—closed them for evermore, and after doing and enduring nobly, after tasting the bitterness of great earthly sorrow. Many long and woeful days, many nights of even greater anguish had she watched, trembled, and prayed, by the couch of a husband sick unto death, and of five children beloved past telling. The sweet, youngest bud in the fair wreath of prince and children had been torn from her bleeding heart, and tears—scalding tears—for the sweet little May-blossom, which she had herself put to its last sleep, under chaplets of flowers—flowed fast, as she folded her hands in gratitude when the peril of death had passed over the heads of her husband and her other children. 'Thus do we learn humility,' she said, with quivering lip, to a lady who stood beside her; 'God has called for one life, and has given me back five for it; how then should I mourn?' And now, when, with fear and trembling, joy seemed about to enter once more into that heavily-stricken home, again the dark pinions of the Angel of Death were heard upon

the air, and he bore away the truest of wives, the most loving of mothers, a sacrifice to duty fulfilled with the noblest forgetfulness of self. These were the thoughts with which the solitary wayfarer went upon his sorrowful way, and crossed the threshold of the chamber of death. With light steps and whispered words the watcher by the dead, whom he relieved, withdrew.

"Overwhelmed by the majesty of death, which met him here in its most sombre form, the new-comer bent his head, and continued long in silent prayer. The Princess lay on a bier in the great hall on the ground floor, where she had so often sat surrounded by a radiant circle of guests. What of her was earthly, cased in a triple cerement, was covered with a pall of black velvet, which, however, was almost hid from view beneath a mass of flowers and palms. Six torches on pedestals, hung with black, stood round the bier, shedding but a feeble glimmer through the hall, and scarcely brighter indeed than the scanty light of the dawning winter day. From the wall opposite the coffin the youthful image of her husband, painted in happier times, looked sadly down upon the loved one lost.

"Helpful, comforting, encouraging, she had given at all times to those who were left behind a brilliant example of cheerful and devoted courage; and when the wounded and sick came back from the battlefields in ever-increasing numbers, she it was who everywhere took the lead with noblest self-abnegation and practical good-sense. By the beds of the sick and dying she stood like a comforting angel, and the love of the Hessian people twined the fairest of all diadems—the aureola of the heroine—round her princely brows.

"This grateful love, not only of those who love arms, but of the citizen and artisan as well, for which these things laid the foundation, was now sincerely and unconstrainedly busy beside the bier of the princely sleeper.

Servants came with loads of wreaths and bouquets, and arranged them upon the coffin. But it was not the official tributes of flowers from court and noble, from the deputations of regiments far and near, which were laid as a mournful homage at the feet of the dead mistress, that touched most deeply the heart of him who stood there on guard. No; the tear that stole down unbidden, the little trivial gift of the poor and humble who lived far away from court favour, had a greater value in his eyes.

"It was still quite early morning when, with the first glimmer of day, came an old peasant woman from the Odenwald. Advancing timidly she laid, with a murmured prayer, a little wreath of rosemary with a couple of small white flowers, perhaps the only ornament of her poor little room at home, as a token of great affection, down upon the velvet pall. Then thinking herself unnoticed, she took a rosebud from one of the splendid wreaths and hid it under her old woollen dress. Who could interfere to baulk the impulse of genuine affection that longed to carry off some slight memorial with it? And now the little flower is lying between the leaves of the old Bible, and in days to come the matron, when she turns the leaves of the sacred volume, will tell her daughters and grand-daughters of the noble lady, too early snatched away from her people—of her who never forgot the poorest and humblest of them all.

"Anon appeared the bearer of one of the proudest names in Hesse, who was attached to the personal services of the Princess. The official, stalwart bearing of the courtier was left outside, and weeping hot, unhidden tears, he lingered long by the bier. To what a lofty soul, to what goodness of heart was he saying here a bitter farewell? He was followed by two little girls, poorly but cleanly dressed, and they too brought their tribute of gratitude—two little bunches of violets. Shyly, almost frightened, and yet with

childish curiosity they drew slowly nearer. They thought of another winter day some years ago. Hungry, chilled to the heart, they were sitting in an empty attic, their parents were dead, and they ate among strangers bread that was hard and grudgingly given, when that great lady appeared who was now sleeping here under the flowers. From her whose heart was ever yearning to the orphan's cry they heard again, for the first time, gentle, loving words; by her provision was quickly made for their more kindly treatment, and gratitude was rooted firmly and for ever in their young hearts.

"In ever-growing numbers came the mourners, all visibly oppressed by the weight of the calamity which had fallen upon the country. Countless were the gifts of love, of gratitude, of respect, which now beautiful and costly, now slight and simple, arched ever higher and higher the hill of flowers above the coffin.

"The ladies of the neighbouring towns sent cushions of dark violets, with chaplets of white flowers. Two ladies, deeply veiled, brought branches of palm, from the dark green of which gleamed a white scroll—a poetic farewell word of deep feeling:—

“ A hurricane charged with destruction,
O palm ! swept o'er thee. The squall
Crashed wild through thy leaves, and tore from thee
The tenderest, sweetest of all.

The clouds clear'd away in the distance,
The tempest seem'd over and past ;
When forth from the firmament darted
A lightning bolt, fiery and fast.

It struck thee, Oh noble one, struck thee !
It crushed thee, and now thou art gone ;
Farewell ! to our death-day thine image
Still, still in our hearts shall live on.'

"There was a second poem, enclosed in a heart-shaped

framework of leaves, which gave expression to the grief of a devoted soul for the high-hearted lady.

"But now the hour was come for another to take the post of honour by the bier of the Princess. Silently and sadly the two men saluted. He that left took away with him a deep and elevating impression of the general love and respect paid by the people of Hesse to their too early departed Princess, and the remembrance of that silent watch by the dead will remain in his memory for ever. And he who now entered on that honourable duty could chronicle proofs of genuine grief, of true reverence and love, not fewer nor less touching." Whosoever is thus bereft has secured the best and fairest memorial in their hearts of her own people for all time. "The remembrance of the just abideth in blessing."

For this beautiful little article we are indebted to a book by the Rev. Charles Bullock, B.D., entitled *England's Royal Home*. Reference is made in it to the services rendered by the Princess during the Franco-German war, of which Sir Theodore Martin, in *Social Notes*, says:—"In the hospitals at Darmstadt, crowded with the soldiers, French as well as German, who had come from the battlefields maimed and racked with pain, she was foremost with her bright intelligence, her helpful sympathy, and her tender hand, in soothing pain and inspiring that sense of manly gratitude which is the best of human panaceas to a soldier's sick-bed. What she was, and what she did at that time, have embalmed her image in many a heart, and will make the tears flow fast in many manly eyes at the thought of the death of one so young and fair. To her it was merely duty—duty to be done at every cost, but how much it had cost to that finely touched spirit, and to that delicate, womanly frame, might be read by all who could look before the surface, in the deep earnestness of her eyes, and the deeper earnestness of her thoughts."

The Princess had learned to love the Fatherland which had received her so kindly ; but her heart turned to her English home. Only the day before her death she said—“I am sorry to cause my mother so much anxiety ;” and she asked that the English flag might rest over her, expressing a hope that “no one in the country of her adoption would object to her wish to be borne to her rest with the old English colours above her.”

It need scarcely be added that the wish was granted. The Grand Duke of Hesse attended as chief-mourner, though he still looked very weak and ill ; and there were present, beside, the Prince of Wales, Prince Leopold, Prince Christian of Holstein, and the Grand Dukes of Mecklenburg and Baden, with many other mourners. The burial service, to which some anthems and chorales were added, was performed by assistant-chaplain Green and an English clergyman, the Rev. Mr. Sillito. As soon as it was over the Grand Duke tenderly embraced the children, as if to show that, for their mother’s sake, they would henceforth be dearer than ever.

While the funeral ceremony was going on at Darmstadt and Rosenhohe, a solemn service was held at Windsor Castle, at which the Queen, the Princess of Wales, Princess Beatrice, the Duke and Duchess of Edinburgh, the Duke of Connaught, the Duke of Cambridge, and the Duchess of Teck were present, besides the members of the royal household. The service was conducted by the Dean of Windsor. The following letter was sent from the Queen to the Secretary of State for the Home Department :—

“OSBORNE, 26th December.

“The Queen is anxious to take the earliest opportunity of expressing publicly her heartfelt thanks for the universal and most touching sympathy shown to her by all classes of her loyal and faithful subjects on the present occasion, when

it has pleased God to call from this world her dearly beloved daughter, the Princess Alice, Grand Duchess of Hesse. Overwhelmed with grief at the loss of a dear child, who was a bright example of loving tenderness, courageous devotion, and self-sacrifice to duty, it is most soothing to the Queen's feelings to see how entirely her grief is shared by her people. The Queen's deeply-afflicted son-in-law, the Grand Duke of Hesse, is also anxious to make known his sincere gratitude for the kind feelings expressed towards himself and his dear children in their terrible bereavement, and his gratification at the appreciation shown by the people of England of the noble and endearing qualities of her whom now all mourn. Seventeen years ago, at this very time, when a similar bereavement crushed the Queen's happiness, and this beloved and lamented daughter was her great comfort and support, the nation evinced the same touching sympathy, as well as when, in December 1871, the Prince of Wales was at the point of death. Such an exhibition of true and tender feeling will ever remain engraven on the Queen's heart, and is the more to be valued at this moment of great distress in the country, which no one can deplore more than the Queen herself."





CHAPTER XXVII.

Later Years

“God bless our Queen ! She is wise and good,
With a mother's heart, and a widow's face ;
She does kind deeds that are understood,
And brightens many a darkened place.”

IN 1879 two wars were going on—one in Afghanistan, and the other in South Africa—and the Zulu campaign was made memorable especially by the fact that the young Prince Imperial, Louis Napoleon of France, was killed in it. He had been studying in English military schools ; and, perhaps to vary the monotony of his life, perhaps to show the French people that he was a brave soldier, perhaps for reasons more personal and private, he offered his services to Lord Chelmsford, and served in the army as a volunteer. On one occasion he and some others were surprised by a body of Zulus, who attacked them. Others escaped, but the unfortunate young Prince was slain. The news of his death created a profound sensation in England. Every one mourned the loss of the gallant young soldier, and people

mourned more for his mother than himself. Seldom, indeed, has such an accumulation of sorrow fallen upon any one than that which has smitten the ex-Empress Eugenie. She has lost all—a throne, wealth, position, her husband, and now her only son. Many hearts ached for her, and among the rest our Queen, who, with Dean Stanley, desired to show respect for the memory of the young life so soon closed, by erecting a monument to his memory in Westminster Abbey. To this, however, a large section of the English people would not agree. They mourned the loss of the Prince, but they could not see that any of the small space of the Abbey should be allotted to one who had fought in a quarrel that was not his own, who was not an Englishman, and deserved nothing special of this country. The Queen, as usual, gave way; and the monument to the memory of the Prince Imperial is in St. George's Chapel, Windsor, instead of in Westminster Abbey.

The English people had no reason to be proud of the Zulu war. It entailed great sacrifice of life, and may be said to have accomplished nothing; for although Cetewayo, the Zulu king, was defeated, captured, and imprisoned, he has since not only been set at liberty, but placed by the Queen again on his throne. Both that war and the massacre in Cabul, with the murder of Sir Louis Cavignari, were troubles which cast dark shadows over the year. The wreck-return for the year showed a loss of sixteen hundred and eighty-eight vessels, with property valued at £25,500,000. Altogether there was enough to cause the new year 1880 to open sadly; and before many months had passed, a surprise for the nation occurred in the shape of a new Parliament. The Government had great difficulties to contend with, but such a reaction as then took place was certainly not expected. Since the time when Lord Beaconsfield returned from Berlin, bringing, as he said, amidst the

plaudits of the crowd, "Peace with Honour," there had been in some quarters a growing dissatisfaction; and when the dissolution took place on 24th March 1880, it was at once seen that a Liberal wave was rolling across the country. The result showed that three hundred and forty-nine Liberals, two hundred and forty-three Conservatives, and fifty-one Home Rulers had been returned. The Queen was on the Continent when the elections took place, but she returned as soon as possible, and after a little delay and hesitation, sent for Mr. Gladstone, who undertook to form a Ministry, and himself become Prime Minister and Chancellor of the Exchequer.

It was to no easy task that the veteran statesman was called. At the very outset a difficulty awaited him in the person of Mr. Bradlaugh, a notorious teacher of atheism, who, after seeking for several years the suffrages of the electors of Northampton, went in on the great Liberal wave already referred to. He asked to make an affirmation instead of taking the oath, but was prevented by a majority: Liberals of the House of Commons as well as Conservatives voting against him. The incident was an unfortunate one, and one that was not easily disposed of. But it was with the troubles of Ireland that Mr. Gladstone and his colleagues found the greatest difficulty in dealing; for all his efforts were delayed by the Obstructionist party of Home Rulers. However, some bills were passed; such as the Burials Bill, the Employers' Liability Bill, and a Supplementary Education Act.

At the beginning of August Mr. Gladstone was smitten with serious illness, which so awoke the sympathy of the nation, that since the illness of the Prince of Wales nothing had been seen like it. The Premier had been working very hard, and the fever and congestion of the lungs therefore took firmer hold of him than would otherwise have been the case. But the illness had at least one compensation—

all parties united in sympathy and hope that Mr. Gladstone would make a good recovery. The Queen testified her interest in her servant, Lord Beaconsfield sent inquiries after the health of his great rival, and Downing Street was filled with crowds formed of all classes and all parties, which waited anxiously for the latest news. As the *Standard* said—"A statesman so enthusiastically attached to his own opinions as the Premier, and so persistent in advocating them, must necessarily excite no small amount of political antagonism, which will sometimes seem to degenerate into personal animosity. But it only needs an occasion like the present to convince us that the language of politics is invariably tinged with exaggeration, and that the most resolute opponents of the Prime Minister in Parliament entertain for him feelings of perfect kindness and genuine admiration." Mr. Gladstone was, happily, only a month absent from his duties. On one of the last days in August he was welcomed back to his place in Parliament.

The troubles in Ireland occupied in Parliament more attention than any other subject. Lord Mountmorris had been murdered, Captain Boycott had been treated according to Mr. Parnell's recommendation, that obnoxious persons "should be shunned as if they were lepers," and the "Land League" was doing so much mischief that the Government thought it necessary to prosecute some of its prominent leaders. The "Return" of cases of eviction showed that as many as 2110 families and 10,657 persons had been evicted during the year.

The Princess of Wales, who is always ready to do gracefully any act of kindness that she can, performed one during the year that was especially pleasing. There was an acre and a-third of land at Whitechapel, which was formerly a burial ground of the Quakers, but which for many years had been unused, which the Rev. S. A. Barnett,

Vicar of St. Jude's, coveted as a garden of rest for his hard-worked neighbours. He wrote a letter to the *Times* appealing for funds, which met with a generous response; and on one fine day the Princess of Wales, daintily dressed, and looking even more beautiful than usual, went down to Whitechapel with her husband, to open the place where the children were to play, and the old people to sit and rest. The tiny, open space amid the squalid courts and tall warehouse, and near the big workhouse, always filled, looked green and inviting; and the children from the various schools, and the crowds from the houses evidently felt that it was a great thing to have a real live Princess smiling so sweetly among them.

The Queen, with the Duke and Duchess of Connaught, Princess Louise, and Princess Beatrice, spent the Christmas holidays, as usual, in a thoroughly homely fashion. With her own hands her Majesty on Christmas Day distributed gifts to the old labourers and their wives on the Osborne estate, and to the children who attend Whippingham School. In London 1168 old people, whose ages ranged from eighty to ninety-six years, more than half of whom were either blind, lame, paralysed, or otherwise afflicted, received presents from the Queen; and a thousand people at Windsor received on New Year's Day gifts of meat and coals.

The year 1881 opened quietly, but only a few days had passed before a most remarkable snow-storm set in, such as for thirty years England had not witnessed. London and the southern counties suffered more than the north; traffic in the streets and on many of the lines of railroad being suspended; letters and newspapers could not be delivered; and many people were snowed up in railway carriages: among the rest, two of her Majesty's judges, who were on their way to open the assizes at Maidstone.

In February the marriage of the prospective heir to the

German crown was celebrated with great pomp in the royal Schloss at Berlin. The wedding awakened some interest in England, because the bridegroom was the grandson of our Queen, Prince Frederick William Victor Albert, eldest son of the Crown Prince of Prussia and Germany, and our Princess Royal. The Queen did not go to Germany to be present at the wedding, but was represented by the Prince of Wales.

In the following month a terrible event occurred in Russia, the news of which shocked the whole civilised world—the Czar Alexander was assassinated in the streets of St. Petersburg. He and his brother were being driven in a closed carriage from the Winter Palace when an explosion took place just behind the carriage, wounding the horses and one of the escort. The carriage came to a standstill, and the Emperor alighted. "Thank God I am untouched," said he calmly, and turned to look after the wounded: but he had only taken a few steps when another young man threw something at the Emperor's feet which exploded. When the smoke cleared away his Majesty was seen lying on the ground in a pool of blood. He was quite unconscious and died two hours later. His life had been threatened many times, and the murder had only been delayed and not averted. Naturally the event caused great consternation and horror in England. For the sake of his daughter as well as the Emperor, all hearts were shocked and pained.

Upon the Queen, who had received the Czar as her guest not long before, the news fell most painfully. And a little later she lost another friend whom she mourned with great sincerity. The Right Honourable Benjamin Disraeli, Earl of Beaconsfield, died of bronchitis on the 19th April 1881. He published his last novel, *Endymion*, almost immediately after the defeat of his party, and went to Hughenden Manor to live in retirement for a time; but he died in Curzon Street,

and was lamented by both foes and friends. The Prince of Wales, the Duke of Connaught, and Prince Leopold attended the funeral, as did most of the members of Lord Beaconsfield's Cabinet, as well as many prominent members of both Houses of Parliament. The Royal Princes themselves placed on the bier the floral tributes sent by the Queen and other members of the royal family. The Queen sent two wreaths: one of primroses with the inscription, "His favourite flowers, from Osborne, a tribute of affection from Queen Victoria," and the other of bay leaves and everlasting flowers. The Queen and the Princess Beatrice subsequently visited the tomb, and placed a wreath and cross of white camelias and other flowers on the coffin of her old friend.

Two months later another friend of our Queen, Arthur Penrhyn Stanley, Dean of Westminster, died. He had been chosen by the Queen to accompany the Prince of Wales in his Eastern tour, and had for many years enjoyed her Majesty's respect. His health had never been very robust, and his wife's death was a great shock to him. Ten days before he died he preached in the Abbey on the "Beatitudes," and his death was felt most keenly. His funeral drew together princes, peers, archbishops, bishops, deans, and Nonconformist ministers, politicians and professors, poets and artists, men of science and of business, who all revered his memory.

In the following September there was another death which, although it did not occur in England, aroused the sympathy both of the English nation and its Queen. General James Garfield, the President of the United States, was shot one day while waiting for a train. For some time it was thought that the wound would not be fatal; but after a period of prolonged suspense, the noble man succumbed on the 19th of September 1881. His courage and Christian fortitude, his splendid patience and

magnanimity, had won all hearts, and the whole world mourned his death. He had been a poor boy, the son of a widow whose husband had been one of the pioneer farmers of the west, and had won his way onward and upward by perseverance, toil, and righteousness; and when he died all the crowned heads of Europe sent messages of respect and condolence. Our Queen naturally thought of the widow's grief, and she sent to Mrs. Garfield this message:—"Words cannot express the deep sympathy I feel with you at this terrible moment. May God support you as He alone can." She ordered an exquisite wreath of white roses, smilax, and stephanotis, to be placed on the coffin, and a card went with it bearing the inscription—"Queen Victoria to the memory of the late President Garfield; an expression of her sorrow and her sympathy with Mrs. Garfield and the American nation." At Washington one hundred and thirty thousand persons passed through the room where he was lying. When the body was removed from the capital to Cleveland, Ohio, his native place, to be buried, although it was night, thousands of persons assembled to see the train pass, and stood with uncovered heads and every manifestation of sympathy. In some places the line was strewn with flowers; all the stations were draped in black, and bells were tolled and salutes fired. More than a hundred thousand persons, some kneeling, thronged the road from the city to the cemetery, and every possible respect was shown to the memory of the man, the motto of whose coat-of-arms fitly described his life—"Through faith I conquer."

During the whole year the attention of our Government was concentrated on Ireland; and the grand result of numerous discussions was the passing of the Irish Land Bill; which it is hoped will do much to allay the discontent and sedition in Ireland. The Coercion Bills had to precede it; and it was followed by the Bribery Bill,

the Bankruptcy Bill, and the Universities Bill, but the Irish Land Act so absorbed the public interest that everything else became as nothing in comparison with it.

It is well known that our Queen and several of her children are artists. Her Majesty especially delights in sketching from nature. Princess Beatrice has published a *Birthday Book*, consisting of illustrations in water-colours, very charmingly executed by the Princess, and designed to represent the twelve months of the year. She had the pleasure to hand two thousand pounds, her share of the profits, to one of the Children's Hospitals. Prince Leopold takes great interest in all matters relating to art; and he and his sister, Princess Louise, are great supporters of the Kyrle Society, which aims to diffuse a love of beautiful things among the working classes. The objects of the society are to preserve open spaces, to lay out parks and gardens, to give concerts, and distribute flowers and paintings; and it may be hoped that there is before it a long career of usefulness.

Princess Christian opened a fancy fair and musical *fête*, which was held at the Albert Hall in aid of the funds of the Chelsea Hospital for Women. It was a great success; it represented an old English Fair; old-fashioned timbered houses were used for stalls, an ancient market-place was constructed, and a feudal castle. There was a Maypole, and around it "ye choycest flowers and fruits were displayed ryghte temptinglie," and "ye olde Chelsea Bun House" was close at hand. Many of the ladies arrived in sedan chairs; and all were attired in Elizabethan, or older dress, some in simple rustic fashion, and some in courtly guise, with powder and patches. The affair caused a great deal of amusement, and resulted in very substantial aid to the Chelsea Hospital.

As few people have any idea of the charities that exist in our land, the following classified return of those of London

alone for 1881, as published in the *Annual Register* for the year, may prove interesting:—

4 Bible societies - - - -	£206,518	0	0	
13 Book and tract societies - - -	79,750	0	0	
		£286,268	0	0
56 Home missions - - - -	466,651	0	0	
11 Home and foreign missions - -	128,537	0	0	
23 Foreign missions - - - -	779,656	0	0	
		1,374,844	0	0
6 Church and chapel building funds -		29,583	0	0
23 Charities for the blind - - -	52,894	0	0	
8 Charities for deaf and dumb - -	16,529	0	0	
7 Charities for incurables - - -	33,221	0	0	
6 Charities for idiots - - - -	53,649	0	0	
		156,293	0	0
17 General hospitals - - - -	269,111	0	0	
8 Consumption hospitals - - - -	54,953	0	0	
5 Ophthalmic hospitals - - - -	9,184	0	0	
3 Orthopædic hospitals - - - -	7,475	0	0	
4 Skin hospitals - - - -	4,686	0	0	
18 Hospitals for women and children -	64,275	0	0	
5 Lying-in hospitals - - - -	7,004	0	0	
22 Miscellaneous special hospitals -	85,959	0	0	
		502,647	0	0
33 General dispensaries - - - -	24,948	0	0	
14 Provident dispensaries - - - -	10,192	0	0	
2 Institutions for vaccination - -	2,650	0	0	
5 Institutions for surgical appliances -	11,913	0	0	
37 Convalescent institutions - - -	33,513	0	0	
14 Nursing institutions - - - -	9,995	0	0	
		93,211	0	0
163 Pensions and institutions for the aged -		422,896	0	0
98 Institutions for general relief - -	339,052	0	0	
23 Food institutions, loan charities, &c. -	8,323	0	0	
		347,375	0	0
87 Voluntary homes - - - -		125,714	0	0
50 Orphanages, &c. - - - -		152,737	0	0
69 Institutions for reformation and prevention -		73,743	0	0
105 „ education - - - -		450,379	0	0
45 „ social improvement - - - -		45,058	0	0
19 „ protection - - - -		60,793	0	0
1,003	Total	£4,121,546	0	0

It is, indeed, an age of wonderful philanthropy in which our Queen lives. That which is done in London is done, though to a less extent, in every other town; and there are, and have been, numbers of people living who devote their time and powers to good works for others. The Earl of Shaftesbury has had a long life of usefulness. He has given his thoughts and attention to many things; the Ragged Schools, the Sunday-schools, the Shoe-black Brigade, and many other means of doing good have been supported by him. He spent his eightieth birthday this year: and his birthday party was made up not of peers, but of poor people, who love him because of his true Christian spirit. A *fête* was held on the 28th of April at the Mansion House, by the members of the Ragged School Union, when a testimonial to Lord Shaftesbury was presented. The Lord Mayor presided, and was attended in state by the Sheriffs and other distinguished persons, who all united in gratefully recognising the services of the noble Earl; Lord Aberdeen moving, and the Right Hon. W. E. Forster seconding, a resolution expressing the same.

One of the good things which the Earl did during the year was to open Exeter Hall under new auspices. The old hall had a wonderful history, for the meetings of all philanthropic societies were for many years held in it. But during this year it was advertised for sale, and many gentlemen thought it would be a pity to let it pass to other uses. At a cost of £25,000 it was secured for the Young Men's Christian Association; and the same amount of money was spent in its rearrangement and decoration. It was reopened by the Earl of Shaftesbury, K.G., President, on the fiftieth anniversary of its original foundation, 29th March 1881.

Another birthday that was kept with some ceremonial was that of the Right Hon. John Bright, who, on the 16th of November, reached the age of seventy. There were messages and letters of congratulation from all parts of the

country ; and at Rochdale the people held a great and never-to-be-forgotten holiday. They gave him a banquet at the close of the day, after which he was escorted home from the Town Hall by a procession of one thousand torch-bearers.

Another celebration of the year was that of the hundredth anniversary of the birth of George Stephenson. The day was observed as a holiday in all the towns of Northumberland and Durham. At Newcastle there was a public breakfast, the object being to raise funds to promote the endowment of forty-two scholarships and exhibitions for students of mechanics belonging to the two counties. A procession, consisting of sixteen of the finest modern locomotives, went from the Central Railway Station to Wylam, where George Stephenson was born. The Mayor of Newcastle, who was accompanied by other dignitaries, planted a memorial oak by Stephenson's cottage. There were trade processions and meetings in Newcastle, and a grand banquet, at which many people of distinction, both English and foreign, were present. At Chesterfield, the Crystal Palace, and in Rome, *fêtes* were held ; at the latter town a tablet, erected at the railway station, was unveiled.

On the 19th of January 1881 a marriage ceremony took place between Mr. Leopold de Rothschild and Madlle. Marie Perugia. It was celebrated at the Central Synagogue in London, and the Prince of Wales was present. As this was the first time that royalty had assisted at a Jewish service, considerable interest was attached to it. We give an account as published in the *Register* :—

“Between the ark and the reading-desk stood the bridal canopy, or *chupsa*, supported by four poles, and supposed to represent the bridegroom's chamber. The ceremony began with the ordinary afternoon service, the responses sung by the boyish voices of the choir. The Psalms were chanted in Hebrew ; the prayer for the royal family was said in

English. At twenty-five minutes after two the bridal procession entered the synagogue, the bride's advancing by the right aisle, the bridegroom's by the left. As the bride passed into the synagogue the ladies in the front rows cast in front of her basketfuls of white flowers. The bride and bridegroom advanced to the canopy, the bride still on the bridegroom's right. The bridegroom had on his shoulders a silken scarf, in the borders of which were woven a thread of blue. It was marked with his initials in gold, united by a true-lover's knot, and had been presented to him by the bride. This *Salith*, or scarf of prayer, is always given by the bride to the bridegroom, and is accompanied among the most orthodox by the gift of a shroud, to serve the same purpose of grim reminder as the coffin at the Egyptian feast. The Rev. A. L. Green, the celebrant of the marriage, took up his position beneath the canopy, and as the bridal procession advanced, the choir burst out into 'Blessed is he who cometh in the name of the Lord ; we bless you from the house of the Lord.' Then began the first part of the marriage ceremony, which represents the ancient betrothal. The priest addressed in English the two who had come before him to be united, his words taking the form of a prayer. The priest gave the bridegroom and then the bride the wine of the sanctification to drink, and the choir sang, invoking blessings on the fortunate pair and praising God, 'who sanctifieth his people Israel by the ceremony of the nuptial canopy and the rite of wedlock.' The bridegroom placed the ring upon his bride's finger, and said in a loud voice, in Hebrew and English, 'Behold, thou art consecrated to me with this ring, according to the law of Moses and Israel.' Then the second part of the ceremony—the marriage proper—began. The marriage-contract was read in Chaldaic, and the following abstract in English of the contract was also recited by Mr. Green:—'On the fourth day of the week, the nineteenth day of the month Shevat,

in the year 5641 A.M., corresponding to the 19th of January 1881, the holy covenant of marriage was entered into, in London, between the bridegroom, Leopold de Rothschild, and his bride, Maria Perugia. The said bridegroom made the following declaration to his wife:—Be thou my wife according to the law of Moses and Israel. I faithfully promise that I will be a true husband unto thee. I will honour and cherish thee; I will work for thee; I will protect and support thee; and will provide all that is necessary for thy due sustenance, even as it beseemeth a Jewish husband to do. I also take upon myself all such further obligations for thy maintenance during thy lifetime as are prescribed by our religious statute. And the said bride has plighted her troth unto him in affection and in sincerity, and has taken upon herself the fulfilment of all the duties incumbent upon a Jewish wife. This covenant of marriage was duly executed and witnessed this day, according to the usage of Israel.' The seven blessings were said, and a prayer was offered up that in Jerusalem and in the cities of Judah there might speedily be heard again 'the voice of joy and the voice of song; the voice of the bridegroom and of the bride.' The priest next placed upon the floor a wine-glass, which the bridegroom, setting his heel firmly on it, splintered into fragments. It is said that the singular custom of shattering a glass at every marriage means that the union should be as hard to dissolve as the fragments are hard to piece together; but the true explanation seems to be that, like the gift of a shroud, it is meant to warn the bridegroom, in the hour of his exaltation, that a Nemesis may crush his happiness as completely as he breaks the fragile vessel. The Hallelujah Chorus was sung, and the ceremony was over. The bride and bridegroom ascended the steps of the reading-desk to sign the marriage-contract, the witnesses to which were the Prince of Wales and Baron Alphonse de Rothschild."

Another interesting ceremony of the year—interesting at least to one section of the people—was in connection with an old institution re-established by Mr. Ruskin. The art criticisms and prose-poems of Mr. Ruskin have exercised more than a little influence on our nation during the reign of our Queen. Mr. Ruskin has also set on foot many methods of doing good. The following from the *Register* tells its own story:—"The first May-day festival was celebrated at Whitelands with perfect success. The arrangements, all suggested by Mr. Ruskin, were enthusiastically carried out by the principal, Miss Stanley, and the students. Morning service in the chapel, which had been most prettily decorated for the occasion, was bright, and at the same time, impressive; the sight and odour of the lovely spring flowers, giving life and reality to the hymn for SS. Philip and James's day. After service the students, in light colours, wreathed and garlanded with flowers, assembled in the training-room to elect their queen. At Mr. Ruskin's desire she was to be a junior, and the 'likablest and lovablest' girl in that body. Both seniors and juniors voted, and Ellen Osborne, the Lillot scholar, was returned by a large majority. While she retired to be robed by her self-chosen maids-of-honour, Miss Kemm, F.H.S., gave a very interesting and instructive account of the history of May-day sports. By the time that the students had sung some May-day glees, the queen was ready to begin her duties. The students quickly arranged themselves to form a pathway, bowed low before her majesty as she passed up their midst to her flowery throne, then fell into a procession, grouped themselves in front of the throne, and saluted the blushing and graceful queen with the glee, 'Hail, Queen.' Her majesty, crowned with moss and holostea, and bearing a white sceptre, then received from Miss Stanley Mr. Ruskin's special gift to the May-Queen—a very beautiful golden cross and chain. When this was clasped on, the

queen accepted some lovely roses from the rector, and proceeded to give away the costly books (also a present from Mr. Ruskin) which had been sent to her for those twenty-five students who should have found favour in the sight of the May-Queen and her maidens. The principal, prime minister for the time being, called out the names of the favoured ones, and also the reasons assigned by her majesty for selecting them. These reasons met with universal approbation. Among the happiest were the following:—A student was unselfish; she was noble and good; she upheld the right; she was pleasant; she helped her companions. Each student received her gift kneeling, and kissed the queen's hand before retiring. After this her majesty proclaimed a half-holiday for her loving subjects, and the meeting broke up; not, however, before the rector had complimented the students on their sweet and beautiful queen, and proposed a vote of thanks to the author of so much pleasure."

To mention Mr. Ruskin is to think of his friend Thomas Carlyle, whose death in Cheyne Row, Chelsea, on the 5th February 1881, led thousands of thoughtful men and women to remember the influence of his writing on their mode of thought. Thomas Carlyle was born at the little village of Ecclefechan, in Dumfriesshire, on the 4th of December 1795. His father, James Carlyle, was a stone-mason, with a family of eight children, of whom Thomas was the eldest. Shortly after the birth of his eldest son, James Carlyle transferred his attention from stone-cutting to farming, renting for that purpose a farm at Scotsberg. Thomas commenced his educational career at the parish school of Hoddam, where he remained until his ninth year, being subsequently sent to the Burgh School of Annan. At the same school was Edward Irving, with whom Carlyle became acquainted at this time. Irving was some years older than Carlyle, but notwithstanding this disparity, the two became

friends, and continued intimate during the greater part of their lives. So early as the age of fourteen Carlyle entered the Edinburgh University, where his studies were chiefly mathematical. Here he lived a somewhat isolated life, not mixing with the other students, and making few friends. His collegiate course of four years having come to an end, it became imperative that he should choose for himself his profession. It was the earnest wish of his parents that he should enter the ministry, but Carlyle, after close self-examination, decided that he could not conscientiously do this. He therefore returned to his old school at Annan, remaining there for two years as teacher of mathematics. He afterwards applied for the post of teacher in the Burgh School of Kirkcaldy, and being elected, occupied that position for two years. Edward Irving was at the same time a teacher in a private school of the same town, and here their boyish friendship ripened into something warmer and deeper. At the end of this time Carlyle had come to the conclusion that the life of a school-teacher did not suit him. Giving up his school, he went to Edinburgh, where he began life as an author, and from that time forward his pen was almost always busy. In 1827 he married Miss Jane Welsh, a descendant of John Knox. She was the owner of a little farm about fifteen miles from Dumfries; and here, in great seclusion, Carlyle and his wife lived for six years, during which time he wrote his remarkable work, *Sartor Resartus*. In 1834 he removed to his residence in Chelsea, which he inhabited until his death. He delivered a course of lectures at Willis's Rooms on favourite subjects, such as "German Literature," "The History of Literature," "The Revolutions of Modern Europe," and "Heroes and Hero Worship;" and his hearers were some of the chief men of letters and the most intelligent people of the day, who at once recognised the wonderful genius of Carlyle. The indomitable perseverance of the man was

shown in connection with the accident which befell the manuscript of his great work on the *French Revolution*. He lent this to Mr. John Stuart Mill, who handed it to Miss Taylor, his future wife. She left it on her table for some days, at the end of which it could not be found. It was thought that a servant had used the manuscript to light the fire. Carlyle lost little time in lamentations, but at once set to work to re-write it. That book was followed by others — *Chartism, Past and Present, Latter-Day Pamphlets, Oliver Cromwell's Letters and Speeches*, and his last great work, the *History of Frederick the Great*. His wife died in 1865, and he himself, at the age of eighty-six, passed away, having accomplished a good life's work, and having been one of the many great men of the Victorian era.

There are two organisations of usefulness which have for their object the saving of life and property, and which have become, during the reign of our Queen, of considerable importance. One of these is the Fire Brigade. A single report of the work of a year in London may be taken as a specimen of that which is done also at other times and in other places:—

“The annual report issued by Captain Shaw, C.B., chief of the Metropolitan Fire Brigade, upon the fires occurring in London during the year 1880, shows that the number of calls to fires received by the Brigade, involving the turning-out of men, horses, and engines, was 2194, of which 162 resulted in serious damage. The total shows an increase over that of 1879 of 153, and over the average of the last ten years an excess of 224. The number of persons seriously endangered by fire was 160, of whom 33 lost their lives, while to firemen there were 411 accidents, three of which resulted in death. The immense amount of 94,000 tons, or in round numbers, 21,000,000 gallons of water, was used by the fire engines. Although there was a large

augmentation in the total number of fires, the proportion of serious to slight losses, 162 to 1709, was decidedly favourable." It will be seen that no small amount of heroism is required to enable the men to do their duty ; but this they seldom fail to do, however great the difficulty or danger.

The Lifeboat Institution is another organisation of which we may well be proud. Our island home is the scene of many storms ; and the vessels that surround our coasts are often in the greatest danger. Although lighthouses and other means of warning have been adopted, every year has its terrible tale to tell of wrecks. The lifeboats stationed at all our principal seaside towns have wrought good service, as we have already mentioned. Sunday-schools, inland towns, and private individuals have vied with each other in presenting lifeboats to the society ; and few outlays of money have been more productive of joy and thankfulness. Our Queen does her part ; and the Albert medal is considered sufficient reward for any risks. Her sons and daughters also show their appreciation of heroic services ; and the Duke of Edinburgh distributed at Ramsgate the medals granted to the crews of the lifeboats who remarkably distinguished themselves in a gale. His royal highness delivered a short address, in which he observed that it afforded him great pleasure to present the rewards given to the men for their self-denying conduct in saving eleven of the crew of the *Indian Chief*.

On 19th May the Princess of Wales was presented with two shawls from the Chamber of Agriculture, with a memorial urging her royal highness to adopt the use of home-grown wool, with the view of thereby assisting the depressed state of agriculture, especially in Yorkshire. It is well known that the Princess does wear English manufactured goods, and that she sympathises with the efforts made by Lady Bective in that direction. But she disappointed some people by declining to become a patroness of

the Association for Encouraging the British Woollen Industries, giving as her reason for doing so her fear that the question might ultimately resolve itself into a conflict between consumers and producers. She felt that the producers had every right to try to protect themselves ; but the Princess felt that she could not take part in any contest between different classes of the population. Perhaps, in connection with this subject, another little chapter of statistics may not be uninteresting, as showing the wealth of the country in which our Queen reigns, and the size and fertility of the land :—"The agricultural statistics of the United Kingdom showed that in Great Britain the area cultivated in 1881 amounted to 32,212,000 acres, as compared with 32,102,000 acres in 1880, an increase of 110,000 in all, which is ascribed to the enclosure or reclamation of mountain and waste land in different parts of the country. The area under wheat was 8,848,000 acres. The area under green crops was 3,510,000 acres. The area under clover and grasses under rotation was 4,342,000 acres. The area under arable lands altogether was 17,568,000 acres. The total number of cattle was 5,911,642. The number of pigs was 2,048,000, and the sheep 24,581,000."

The year 1881 was a peaceful one for the Queen—altogether different from the eventful first months of the next year. Of course it was busy, but she had time to think of many things, and among the rest some tributes to departed friends.

Her Majesty caused to be placed in St. George's Chapel, Windsor, a marble memorial of the late King of Hanover, the inscription of which reads :—

"Here has come to rest among his kindred, the royal family of England, George the Fifth, the last King of Hanover ; born at Berlin, 27th May 1819 ; died at Paris, 12th June 1878. 'Receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved ; in this light shall he see light.'"

The brass tablet in memory of Prince Almayu runs :—
“Near this spot lies buried, Almayu, the son of Theodore, King of Abyssinia; born 23d April 1861; died 14th November 1879. This tablet is placed here to his memory by Queen Victoria. ‘I was a stranger and ye took me in.’”

Victoria has never forgotten to pay the respect due to the dead; nor does she omit any duty to the living. The volunteer movement celebrated its “majority” by a review before the Queen in Windsor Park on the 9th of July 1881. Fifty-six thousand men took part in the review; they came from all parts of the country—even from Pembroke and Northumberland, and the Queen expressed herself greatly pleased with their proficiency. The next month there was a grand review of Scotch volunteers held at Edinburgh by the Queen. Thirty-six thousand men gathered from all parts of Scotland, and four thousand from the border country. The review ground was at the foot of Arthur’s Seat; and it was estimated that above a quarter of a million of her Majesty’s loving subjects had come, not only to see the volunteers, but to testify their loyalty to the Queen.





CHAPTER XXVIII.

God Save the Queen.

“ God save our gracious Queen,
Long live our noble Queen,
God save the Queen ;
Send her victorious,
Happy and glorious,
Long to reign over us,
God save the Queen.”

THE commencement of the year 1882 proved to be a very eventful time to the Queen. She spent the first few weeks quietly at Osborne, and one of the pleasant occupations of her Majesty's holiday was to go to Bagshot Park to see the latest addition to her list of grandchildren. A little later the Queen was present at the baptism of this child, the infant daughter of the Duke and Duchess of Connaught, and herself gave the name Margaret Victoria Augusta Charlotte Norah. Some of her time, too, was occupied with the letters and messages from America which her Majesty's interest in President Garfield called forth. She could not acknowledge all ; but she did make a little child happy by sending a kindly

message. This little girl sent to our Queen a wild flower from the President's grave, which delighted her Majesty very much. The Queen is especially careful not to disappoint children. "I'll bring a pretty toy for you when we come back next year," she said to a little child one day; and true to her word, when visiting the same spot the next year, she took with her the promised present. So kind is the Queen that her grandchildren and great-grandchildren are always glad to be invited to see her. The thorough homeliness of the homes of her Majesty is proverbial.

In the beginning of March 1882 the Queen, for the seventh time, escaped from danger, if not from death. It was in 1840 that Oxford fired at her Majesty twice while driving up Constitution Hill. In 1842 John Francis fired at her, and soon afterwards a man named Bain took aim at her with a pistol. Seven years afterwards the Queen was again fired at, this time by Hamilton, an Irish bricklayer. The next year an ex-officer struck her in the face with a cane. In 1872 a lad, a Fenian, named O'Connor, presented a pistol at her Majesty. After that, for ten years she was unmolested. But on the 2d of March 1882, on returning to Windsor from Buckingham Palace, where the Queen had held a drawing-room the day before, the carriage in which she and the Princess Beatrice were seated was fired at by a young man named Roderick Maclean. They had just arrived by train, and were driving from the station to the Castle, when the man levelled a revolver and fired. Her Majesty scarcely knew of it until the danger was over, but Princess Beatrice saw the man present the pistol, and comprehended in a moment the danger in which she herself and her royal mother was placed. But the Princess belongs to a family in which courage is exceedingly strongly developed; and she kept her seat quietly and said nothing until they were safe in the Castle. The man himself, who declared afterwards that he did not wish to do the Queen bodily harm, but only to

intimidate her, was at once secured ; and among the crowd who witnessed the dastardly attempt, an Eton boy gratified his own feelings, and distinguished himself by belabouring Maclean over the head with an umbrella. The carriage drove on its way ; and it was only when the Queen had gained the quiet of her own apartments that she allowed herself to dwell upon the danger which had menaced not only herself but her beloved daughter, and the faithful friends and attendants who had surrounded her. She expressed gratitude to God, and then passed to the next duty, as if anxious to make as little fuss as possible about it.

But her people, and all the nations of the civilised world, were so filled with joy and thanksgiving at the great deliverance vouchsafed to her Majesty that they could not be silent. And, even had these feelings been absent, admiration of the unshaken nerves, and high personal courage of the Queen, must have found expression. Earl Granville said, in the House of Lords, "I remember as if it were yesterday, that in 1850 Lord John Russell, a man of singularly calm and collected character, told me, immediately after an outrage on the Queen, that he was perfectly astonished at the courage her Majesty exhibited at that moment. Thirty-two years have elapsed since that time, and it is possible that her Majesty has suffered some diminution of physical strength, but the same brave spirit that characterised her Majesty at that time has remained to this day. The first inquiry of the Queen was whether anyone was hurt. She next expressed her appreciation of the courage of the Princess Beatrice. It is with the highest satisfaction that I state—and I state it on the highest authority, that of the illustrious Prince who has only just left the Queen—that after this attempt, which was enough to shock the nerves of the bravest man, he left her Majesty in the enjoyment of the same health as she had possessed before the attempt."

In the House of Commons Mr. Gladstone said, "Her Majesty has deeply felt that sentiment of thankfulness which ever overpowers and overshadows the sentiment of pain on this occasion. She has felt it not only for herself, but for the other lives which were wickedly and recklessly exposed, even with a more absolute want of cause or pretext, than might be said to be the case in the instance of her Majesty. The Princess Beatrice, we are rejoiced to learn, has shown on this occasion remarkable courage, together with an entire forgetfulness of herself in her absorption in the attempt on the life of her illustrious mother." And Sir Stafford Northcote added, "We cannot but feel, that she who has always been so prompt in her sympathy for others, has a claim upon our sympathy independently even of considerations of loyalty. We cannot but feel that it would have been strange if a sovereign who commands so much of the respect and sympathy of foreign nations, and who has never been slow to express her own sympathy with others in misfortune, had not received such assurances."

In a few hours congratulations poured in upon the Queen from all parts. Emperors, kings, and presidents telegraphed their assurances of sympathy and joy at her Majesty's escape. Wherever public bodies were sitting in foreign countries, or in the colonies, resolutions were passed, which showed how greatly Queen Victoria is honoured and revered throughout the civilised world. Australia and Canada were as deeply stirred as the British Islands; and in the great cities of the Continent, thanksgivings as hearty went up to God as from the centres of our own provincial life. But after all it was the loyalty at home that most delighted our Queen. It was very spontaneous and sincere, and so universal that it proved beyond a doubt that, how ever diversified may be the political opinions of Englishmen they are all united in their love of the Queen. Our National Anthem has nothing particularly to recommend

it ; but it is the only one we have, and it is surprising how much feeling it can be made to express. It was sung by voices that quivered, and accompanied by tears, in every theatre and concert hall, and even on the Stock Exchange ; while on the Sunday that followed, prayers and thanksgivings for the Queen were offered in every cathedral, church, chapel, and synagogue in the kingdom. We are a Christian nation, and we have a Christian Queen ; and both the Queen and her people acknowledge the hand of God in the protection that had been afforded her. She often attends the week-day service at St. George's Chapel, and did so on the morning after the attempt on her life. Many of the printed congratulations were in the same spirit of thankfulness, one of which we subjoin—

“ Not in the soldiers riding beside her,
Not in protection of gun or sword,
Shall be our confidence.—God is for her,
Our Queen is safe in the care of the Lord.

A thousand prayers go up to Him for her
Every day, for we know our Queen,
Gentle and gracious, pure and womanly,
The best of the sovereigns our land has seen.

A burst of joy, a shout of thanksgiving,
And the old love kindled to ardour new,
Have been the peoples' response to the tidings
Of the perilous moment passed safely through.

Grand is our Queen in her quiet courage,
She lifts her head with a happy smile—
' Was it a shot ? Did it injure any ? '
And the matter passed in a little while.

But we her people, and all the nations,
Cannot forget it. With sobbing breath
We cry together,—O God, we thank Thee,
We thank Thee for saving our Queen from death.

And we pray God bless her, and still preserve her,
Our mother-Queen who is good and dear ;
She longs sometimes for the love in heaven,
But leave her yet to the love that is here !

And give her an evening long and peaceful,
Amid fair, calm lights in the glowing west ;
And at last the hush, the unbroken quiet,
Of those who have found in Thee their rest."

The people showed their gratitude in deeds as well as words. A window was placed in the chancel of the church of Holy Trinity, Windsor (and unveiled by the Prince and Princess of Wales), to commemorate the escape of her Majesty from assassination. The window consists of three panels, the subject of the upper one being the Ascension, that in the middle contains a crowned female figure, of queenly aspect, seated in a chair of state, holding a sceptre in her right hand and a wreath in her left. Behind the throne is St. Michael restraining death, who carries a flaming torch and a sword, the blade of which is breaking into pieces. The lower panel has a figure of the Saviour, with a woman kneeling at His feet. The inscription is as follows:—"To the glory of God, and in grateful commemoration of the merciful deliverance of her Gracious Majesty Queen Victoria on the 2d of March 1882."

The ladies of Blackheath, as a thank-offering for the escape of her Majesty from the attack made by Maclean, subscribed a considerable sum to be known as the Victoria Benefit Fund, the interest of which will be applied to provide for the admission of free patients to the local Cottage Hospital. The Queen hearing of this thank-offering, expressed her extreme gratification at the kind and loyal feeling of the ladies of Blackheath, which was manifested in so practical a manner.

It had been decided, before the attempt on the life of the Queen, that she should spend a few weeks of the spring of

1882 in Mentone. The untoward event did not delay her Majesty's holiday. On the eve of her departure she wrote a letter to her people, thanking them for their kind sympathy, and assuring them of her love ; it was a letter worthy of our Queen, a letter which showed how well she understands, and is understood, by the nation, and which proved beyond doubt that her heart had been greatly touched by the loyal assurances of the respect of all her subjects. It made us feel that we are one great family, and that the Queen, motherly and good as she is, is more than worthy of our love. Many prayers went up to God that she might be taken and brought back safely, and that her visit to the South of France might be a happy one, and greatly conduce to her health. And the event proved that the wishes of the people were granted.

The royal party crossed the Channel from Portsmouth to Cherbourg. They dined and slept on board the yacht, and reached Mentone in safety after a pleasant voyage. The Princess Beatrice was, as usual, her Majesty's companion ; and Prince Leopold joined them on their arrival. Great preparations were made in anticipation of the Queen's visit, and all the roads leading to the Villa de Rosiers were enlarged and rearranged. A new railway station was constructed in front of the villa, for the special use of the Queen, and a telegraph wire connected the royal abode at Mentone with London. The Queen declined the protection of a French guard of honour ; but gendarmes and English police were stationed in the town. The Queen took the title of the Countess of Balmoral during her holiday ; but, of course, everyone knew that she was the Sovereign of England, and the greatest care was taken of her. Both she and Princess Beatrice felt quite at home, and enjoyed their visit thoroughly. The villa they occupied was most picturesquely situated on the slope of the mountain, in the midst of orange groves, and commanding

lovely prospects of some of the favourite watering-places on the shores of the Mediterranean. The Queen was charmed with it, and spent three very pleasant weeks in the quiet simplicity of the every-day home-life, which is what she so much appreciates. Every morning, immediately after family prayers, her Majesty gave her prompt and careful attention to the business of the State, from which, even at Mentone, she might not be altogether free; and then she and the Princess Beatrice drove in an open carriage along the roads overlooking the sea. Later in the day the Queen spent some time in reading, while the Princess gratified her fondness for music. Both the Queen and the Princess did a little sketching. Dr. Bennet, a well-known physician, placed his private mountain garden at the service of the Queen during her stay. This garden is a singularly quaint and charming retreat; it is, indeed, one of the chief local attractions of Mentone. It consists of a succession of terraces, with steep connecting paths, formed on the declivity of the mountain side. It is laid out and planned with such wonderful taste, that fresh beauties are constantly being discovered. Here flowers, entirely of one kind, are planted in brilliant masses, their delicious perfume exhaling on every side: there a cool nook, almost dark with its close trellis of vine leaves, but at one end a vignette of Mentone in the distance, so perfect as a picture, that one thankfully sinks into the amply-provided seats, to enjoy at leisure what seems almost a vision of fairy-land. Rock plants and rare ferns have their appropriate location in cavernous niches or by trickling fountains. The variety is charming and never-ending. The Queen enjoyed this garden greatly. She also drove to the residence of Mr. Hanbury, an English gentleman, and inspected his garden, which is one of the sights of the Riviera. Her Majesty was so delighted with the fairy-like scene that she spent two hours there, and made several sketches of it. The Princess enjoyed doing a

little shopping; and the Queen and her daughter more than once visited some pottery works and made extensive purchases.

On one occasion when they were driving an old man tried to throw into the carriage a bouquet of simple flowers, but he missed his mark, and instead of falling at the feet of the Queen the flowers fell into the road. Her Majesty at once ordered the carriage to stop, that he might have another shot. This time he was successful, and with a nod and smile of pleasure the Queen accepted the old man's offer of flowers.

The short holiday came speedily to a close, and the last part of it was unfortunately spoiled by the illness of Prince Leopold, who had not derived as much benefit from the stay on the Continent as had the Queen herself. Before leaving Mentone her Majesty gave three thousand francs to the poor in the locality, one thousand five hundred francs to the charitable institutions, a set of diamond studs to the Mayor, a portrait of herself and Princess Beatrice to the British Consul, a diamond pin to the Consul's son, a diamond ring to the local postmaster, a watch chain to the stationmaster, a gold pencil case and pen to the under stationmaster, and a ring to the Commissaire of Police. The Queen and Princess Beatrice went home to Windsor, looking wonderfully well after their visit to the South of France; and were most gladly welcomed by the people.





CHAPTER XXIX.

The Marriage of the Youngest Son.

"May God, who blessed the opening life,
Bless still the husband and the wife."

THE only shadow upon the hearts of the royal family, when the Queen returned from Mentone, was caused by the continued illness of Prince Leopold, and this trouble was felt the more keenly because of his approaching wedding. The marriage, however, was only delayed for a short time, the Prince, who has never been very strong, recovering sufficiently in a few weeks.

The marriage of the youngest son of the Queen was an event which naturally excited the deepest interest in her Majesty, and it was the occasion of a very brilliant State ceremonial. The Prince was, at the time of his marriage, in his twenty-ninth year. His bride is eight years younger than he, and is the fourth child of a family of six. The Princess Helen, the daughter of the reigning Prince and Princess of Waldeck-Pyrmont, is a member of an old Protestant family, connected with several of the reigning dynasties of Europe. It is said that she is not exactly a

beauty, nor a very learned or witty lady, but that she is pleasant, merry, exceedingly good-tempered, well-informed, and the best of company. She could talk English a little and laugh heartily over her own mistakes. She is frank, brave, and fond of jollity ; she is amiable in disposition, has been carefully brought up, is thoroughly domesticated, and is much more anxious to please than to shine. The match was one of pure affection. The young people seem to have met in the autumn of 1881 at the little watering-place of Soden ; and there probably the Prince fell in love with his future bride. After he had been home and told his royal mother of his wishes, and received her sanction, he went to the old German town of Frankfort, where the betrothal took place. Early in the new year the Prince visited his future bride in her own quiet home at Arolsen ; and on the 22d of February he returned to this country, bringing the Princess with him, that he might introduce her to her future mother-in-law, the Queen of England, who received her in the most cordial and affectionate manner. The Princess Helen was accompanied by her father and others, and they spent ten days pleasantly in England as the guests of the Queen at Windsor. The visit was strictly private throughout, and at its close the Princess went home to Arolsen to spend a few weeks preparatory to her marriage.

The announcement of the engagement of Prince Leopold filled all her Majesty's subjects with delight, for the Prince himself had so lived his life as to win universal respect and esteem. It will be remembered that the name by which he had been called was given by his mother in gratitude to her uncle the late King of the Belgians. She herself thus wrote from Buckingham Palace in April 1853 :—"I can report most favourably of myself, for I have never been better or stronger. Stockmar will have told you that Leopold is to be the name of our fourth young gentleman. It is a mark of love and affection of

which I hope you will not disapprove. It is a name which is dearest to me, after Albert's, and one which recalls the almost only happy days of my sad childhood. To hear 'Prince Leopold' again will make me think of all those days! His other names will be George Duncan Albert, and the sponsors the King of Hanover, Ernest Hohenlohe, the Princess of Prussia, and Mary of Cambridge. George is after the King of Hanover, and Duncan is a compliment to dear Scotland." Scotland was still further complimented twenty-eight years later, when the Queen gave to her youngest son another title, expressing the wish that he should be called Prince Leopold, Duke of Albany. The health of the young Prince was such as to occasion his father and mother some anxiety, and after the death of the Prince Consort he was for some years seldom absent from the Queen. He was instructed by various masters and tutors at home during his earlier years, and in 1872 he went to Oxford. He spent three years there; and afterwards spoke of his appreciation of the advantages he had received thus:—"My experience of universities is confined to the University of Oxford, and I shall always look back to my residence there as one of the greatest pleasures and the greatest privileges of my life, and I should find it hard to believe that any other university can surpass Oxford in the power of attaching her *alumni* to herself." When the Prince uttered these words he was speaking at the Mansion House, in aid of the University Extension Scheme, and he paid a graceful tribute to Mr. Ruskin on the same occasion:—"Of such aims we in Oxford have had a great and inspiring example. We have seen a man in whom all the gifts and refinement of genius meet, and who yet has not grudged to give his best to all; who has made it his main efforts by gifts, by teaching, by sympathy, to spread among the artisans of Sheffield and the labourers of our English fields the power of drawing the full measure of instruction and happiness

from this wonderful world, on which rich and poor can gaze alike. Such a man we have seen in Professor Ruskin. And amongst all the lessons which those who have had the privilege of his teaching and his friendship must have gained, to carry with them through life, none I think can have sunk deeper than the lesson, that the highest wisdom and the highest pleasure need not be costly or exclusive, but may be almost as cheap and as free as air." The Duke of Albany has emphasised this teaching on every possible occasion; and he is himself greatly interested in making the love of Art general among the English people. He has travelled considerably, and his public appearances have been numerous. He is a very polished speaker, and those who remember his illustrious father declare that there is in him both a mental and physical resemblance.

The Princess Helen of Waldeck had quite a triumphal journey from her home in Arolsen to Windsor. Flowers were presented to her, and cast in her path as she left Germany; and flowers and sunshine greeted her arrival in England. She was accompanied by her father, and mother, and sister, and a favourite white terrier, the gift of the Duke of Nassau. At Queenborough the Mayor presented the Princess with an address of welcome, and she replied:—"Mr. Mayor and gentlemen—I thank you most sincerely for the hearty welcome you have given me to my new home." When they arrived at Windsor, Prince Leopold handed his bride from the carriage; and some of his brothers and sisters welcomed her. The Queen received her at the castle with motherly kindness, and the young stranger evidently soon felt at home in the midst of the royal family. Windsor Castle was full of guests. The King and Queen of the Netherlands, the brother-in-law and sister of the bride, came over to be present at the ceremony, and nearly thirty other royal personages were stationed at Windsor. The wedding presents were arranged in the

White Drawing-room, and were very costly and magnificent. The inhabitants of Windsor presented a diamond bracelet to the bride. The Queen's presents were a pearl and diamond necklace, amethyst and diamond necklace, old enamel and diamond brooch and ear-rings, old Argentine lace, Indian shawls, a picture in oils of the bride, and a very beautiful dress, specially designed, being composed of large red roses in raised velvet, upon a ground of pale blue satin. The petticoat was of satin, and trimmed with Honiton lace. The marriage-treaty of the Duke and Duchess of Albany, contracted between Queen Victoria and the reigning Prince of Waldeck, provided that the Prince of Waldeck would grant Princess Helen a dowry of £5000, and provide her with princely apparel, jewels, and an outfit suitable to a Princess of Waldeck and Pymont. The treaty provided that in case of the death of the Prince, the Princess was to receive an annual allowance of £6000, and during his life-time £1500 a-year for her own exclusive use.

The wedding was an altogether brilliant affair ; and although the morning was cloudy, Queen's weather prevailed during the rest of the day. Holders of tickets began to assemble at seven o'clock in the morning, and thousands of people covered the slopes of Castle Hill, who cheered the illustrious guests as they passed. The Duke of Cambridge, the Princess Louise, the Duke and Duchess of Connaught, Prince and Princess Christian, and the Duke and Duchess of Edinburgh, were all cheered ; and still more hearty were the greetings given to the Prince and Princess of Wales, and the reigning Princess of Waldeck, who was accompanied by her son and youngest daughter, and the Queen of the Netherlands. There were four processions, the royal procession already mentioned forming the first. The second procession was that of our Queen, who was accompanied by Princess Beatrice and Princess Victoria of Hesse. Her Majesty looked exceedingly well, and bowed smilingly to

the throngs of people who cheered her. The bridegroom's procession came next, Prince Leopold being supported by his eldest brother, the Prince of Wales, and the Grand Duke of Hesse. Next followed the bride, accompanied by her father and brother-in-law. She looked very charming and happy, and appeared to be greatly pleased with the acclamations that were accorded her. The bridesmaids, eight in number, were the unmarried daughters of dukes, marquises, or earls. The bride's wedding dress, which had been presented by her sister, the Queen of Holland, consisted of a petticoat of rich white satin, showing at the edge orange blossoms and myrtle, and trimmed with point d'Alençon lace; and the long train was embroidered in silver and raised bouquets of *fleur-de-lis*, edged with white satin and point d'Alençon. The veil was of the same fabric, and the wreath was of orange flowers and myrtle. The Queen wore a robe of black satin, trimmed with chenille and pearls, and the Honiton lace worn by her at her own marriage; and she wore the Koh-i-noor as a brooch, and the Orders of the Garter, Victoria and Albert, and Star of India. Princess Beatrice wore a bodice of Pompadour satin trimmed with roses, and a skirt of Argenton lace. This lace was very magnificent, and there was rather an interesting incident connected with it. A few years ago, in girlish curiosity, her royal highness was turning out an old cabinet in one of the Queen's apartments, when she found a parcel of extremely old laces, said to be worth thirty thousand pounds, and among them was the lace in which she appeared at the Duke of Albany's wedding. The marriage ceremony was celebrated by the Archbishop of Canterbury, who read the service simply and beautifully, assisted by the Bishops of London, Oxford, Winchester, and Worcester. As soon as the benediction was pronounced, Prince Leopold took his bride to his mother, who first kissed her son, and then took her new daughter in her arms and

embraced her very affectionately. On their return to the castle luncheon was served in the Great Dining-room. In the afternoon the bride and bridegroom, amid the strains of the national anthem and the Waldeck hymn, took their departure for Claremont, their future home—heavy showers of slippers and rice being rained upon them. A slipper, well-aimed by the Prince of Wales, struck the bridegroom, who returned the blow amid the laughter of the family. The journey of the newly married pair was taken through lines of sympathetic people, with whom all the nation was united in wishing the young couple all happiness and blessing.





CHAPTER XXX.

Hitherto.

“ And be thine evening fair and calm,
With love and rest, and sacred psalm.”

IN drawing to a close our sketch of the life and times of our most gracious Queen, we congratulate the nation that her reign has been so long, and hope that it may be longer still. It has been in all respects a glorious one, and the advancements made in art and science, literature and commerce, have been simply wonderful. When we think of the penny postage system, the railways, the telegraphs, the steam ships, and all the other improvements which have taken place since her Majesty came to the throne, we may well be glad that it has fallen to our lot to live in such happy times. The prayer of all her Majesty's subjects, not only in England, but in the Colonies and all the countries which rejoice under her gentle sway, is “*God save the Queen.*” We owe more than we know to her. It is natural to copy those who are in high places, and the safety and purity of our British homes are testimonies to the kind of domestic life that is lived in the palaces of the land.

Nor can we be other than glad that in the home which is next in importance to that of our Queen, the same good sense and righteousness prevail. All that we know of the Princess of Wales is calculated to deepen the love and loyalty of the people of Britain. Her eldest son, who is, after his father, the heir to the throne, has been, with his brother, most wisely trained. It is in accordance with their mother's wish that her boys have received none of those orders and decorations which would otherwise have been showered upon them. She has all her children brought up with as little "coddling" as possible, but she puts her daughters into skirts that reach to the ancles, hoping to put an end to the fashion of very short dresses for children. She is very popular in the district of Sandringham, owing to the unostentatious way in which she moves about among rich and poor alike. The people say that the Princess of Wales has solved the problem of perpetual youth, for she looks very little older now than when we first welcomed her to our country. She possesses a good deal of self-control. She was playing snap-dragon with her children one day, when she upset the vessel of burning spirit, and the consequence was that her dress caught fire, her eyebrows were singed, and her arm slightly injured. But she was the coolest of the group, and herself tore away the burning portion of her skirt. But she got a little frightened at Leicester, when a man, who afterwards confessed that he had made a bet that he would shake hands with the Princess, forced his way past the guard, and tried to take hold of her. Somebody persuaded the Princess to give her "mental photograph" in one of the albums designed for that purpose, in which she confessed that her favourite name was "Dagmar," which was that of her sister, the Empress of Russia; her favourite dish, "Yorkshire pudding;" her favourite art, "Millinery;" and her favourite occupation, "Minding my own business." It was a great delight to the Prince and Princess of Wales

when their sons came home from their voyages and travels, and they were confirmed at Whippingham Church, in the Isle of Wight. The young Princes wore the uniform of midshipmen of the Royal Navy. The Queen was present, and many members of the royal family ; and in accordance with her Majesty's desire, every rank on board the *Bacchante*, the vessel in which the Princes Victor and George had received their training, was represented.

There is every reason for hope that a great and good future is in store for England ; but the best hope, after all, is that our Queen has yet many happy years before her. She has lately given a reception to Cetewayo, who has gone back to Zululand, and his words respecting her were, "She is a good, gracious lady, and like myself, was born to rule." The king's reference to himself has an amusing element in it ; but his reference to the Queen was true. Motherly and homely as she is, she is every inch a Queen. But her gracious kindness shows itself in every possible way. She is true to her friends. One of her latest acts (at the time of writing these words) was to send a wreath by the Prince of Wales, to be laid on the coffin of the Dean of Windsor. It was in loving and affectionate remembrance of one who was greatly esteemed, not only by the Queen, but by the Prince Consort. The *Court Circular* said :—"The loss to the Queen, to whom the Dean had been a devoted, valuable, and dear friend, as well as a wise counsellor, is irreparable." And the same kind remembrance is shown to all who have served the Queen. Three short notices, taken from the papers, will illustrate this :—"The Queen has caused a memorial-stone to be placed over the grave of the late Mr. Andrew Toward, in Whippingham Churchyard, bearing an inscription, written by her Majesty, in which mention is made of the fact that he was 'the faithful land-steward of Queen Victoria and the Prince Consort, by whom he was much esteemed.'" "The funeral took place at Highgate of

Mrs. Lilly, who died at Camberwell in her ninety-second year. She attended the Queen as monthly nurse at the birth of her Majesty's nine children, and was greatly respected and esteemed by her. The Queen constantly sent to inquire after her old nurse, and four years ago Mrs. Lilly came to see her Majesty and several members of the royal family at Buckingham Palace, being then in her eighty-eighth year. The Queen sent a wreath to be placed on her grave." "Her Majesty has been grieved by the loss of a highly-valued and faithful servant, who died at the Shaw Farm, Windsor. For twenty-four years Mr. Tait had charge of the royal farms. The other day her Majesty paid a visit of condolence to Mrs. Miles, in Windsor, widow of Mr. Miles, who was formerly in the Queen's employ, and whose body was recently found in the Thames."

And yet, though her Majesty never forgets any little kindly attention to her old friends and faithful servants when they are in trouble, her life is one of incessant activity. She is one of the most hard-worked women of her day. She is very regular and thorough in her methods of work, or she could not get through her duties satisfactorily. The daily routine never varies. Her morning work never fails to come, nor she to discharge it. She looks into everything herself, and few people can imagine the prodigious number and variety of subjects which are brought for her decision. It is an axiom among those who serve her Majesty that if she will only look into their case they may be sure of having strict justice done to them. At Windsor her life is more laborious than elsewhere, as it is impossible there to get away from the pomp and pageantry of a court; and many visitors and ceremonies claim her attention. When the weather is fine her Majesty drives in an open carriage to Frogmore, and there breakfasts in the house, unless the day is very hot, when she takes the meal in a tent on the lawn. After breakfast she reads her private

letters and newspapers. The latter are first read by one of the ladies-in-waiting, who marks all the paragraphs which she supposes will interest her Majesty. Afterwards the Queen goes to another room or tent and proceeds at once to the business of the day. There are seldom less than twenty, and often more than thirty boxes of papers and despatches to be gone through, and a groom is kept constantly employed riding between the Queen at Frogmore and Sir Henry Ponsonby at the Castle. After about three hours of real hard work the Queen drives back to the Castle with the boxes in the carriage. These boxes are carried upstairs on a tray, and the contents sorted and despatched by Sir Henry Ponsonby. Her Majesty then lunches with Princess Beatrice and any other members of the family who are at the Castle, and unless there is any ceremony of state appointed for the day they take a walk together in the gardens, and later, go out for a drive. On their return they retire for a little necessary rest, and then prepare for dinner, which brings visitors who must be received and entertained. It is said that the Queen greatly dislikes the presence of the innumerable sentries placed about the Castle; the monotonous tramp of whose feet never ceases along the path immediately beneath her private apartments. Early in May of the year 1882 the Queen went to Epping Forest to declare it open to the people for ever. The weather was splendid, and her Majesty rode through lines of enthusiastic spectators. An address was presented to her on behalf of the corporation, and she replied—"I thank you most sincerely for your loyal and dutiful address. It gives me the greatest satisfaction to dedicate this beautiful forest to the enjoyment of my people for ever." A tree was afterwards planted in the name of her Majesty in honour of the event. The area which is thus set apart for recreation contains about 5600 acres of charming forest land, which was gradually falling into the hands of the enclosers.

It will be seen that our Queen cares for her people both in peace and war. She wished "God-speed" to the soldiers who went out to Egypt; and no one was more gratified or grateful to the officers and men who won such gallant victories there. She was at Balmoral when Sir Garnet Wolsley returned, and she sent for him to come to Scotland to her that she might personally congratulate and thank him, and through him all the soldiers for their services. It is to be hoped, however, that the following years of her Majesty's reign may be peaceful ones, and that we may have rest from war. The whole nation rejoices that our Queen has lived long enough to see her sixty-third birthday. May she live to be really old! May every year bring her a happy return of her birthday. May the evening of her life be bright, and fair, and tranquil. May her health and strength continue, and her powers of mind remain clear and strong as they are to-day. May the end be long delayed; but when it comes, may it but bring her to a happier and fuller life at the feet of Him who is the King of kings: and when she lays aside her queenly glory and earthly crown, may it be replaced by the crown of life which fadeth not away.

"God Save the Queen!"



